Crash Course

A step-by-step introduction to Premiere Pro CC

By Dave Kreutzer

Getting Started

The purpose of this document is to get the beginning editor up to speed with Adobe Premiere Pro as quickly as possible. The main difficulty in learning most editing systems is that there are numerous ways to accomplish any given task. Here we will learn only the fastest. Even if you've worked with Premiere Pro before, following these steps exactly will help eliminate bad habits that might cause you problems as you move on to more advanced techniques.

Text in yellow boxes will tell you why you are being asked to perform specific tasks. Also in yellow will be "Rookie Mistakes" - problems that are common amongst beginning editors. Blue boxes will contain keyboard commands and other shortcuts that will be worth your time to memorize. The rest of the text will contain step-by-step directions that can be referenced quickly for every project until they are ingrained in your memory.

All rules are meant to be broken, and the rules of editing are no exception. Once you understand the fundamentals, feel free to experiment with different workflows to find what works best for you.

Let's begin.

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MEDIA MANAGEMENT

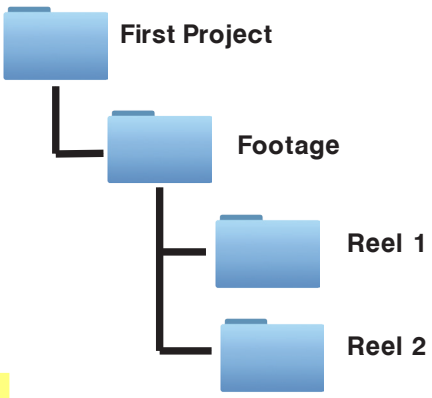
Before we start, we need to organize all of our assets to avoid later confusion:

1. Create a folder for your project. All files related to your project will be stored here. It is best if this folder is on a different hard drive from the one on which Premiere Pro is installed.

2. Within your project folder, create another folder called “Footage”. Copy all of your audio and video files and paste them here.

3. If you have multiple cards from the camera, give each its own folder with a unique name.

4. (Optional) You may wish to rename all of your footage files if your camera or sound recorder starts its file naming over with each new card. So if reel 1 contains files named “000000”, “000001”, “000002”, and reel 2 contains different files also named “000000”, “000001”... giving those files unique names now will save you from headaches in the future.



WHY?

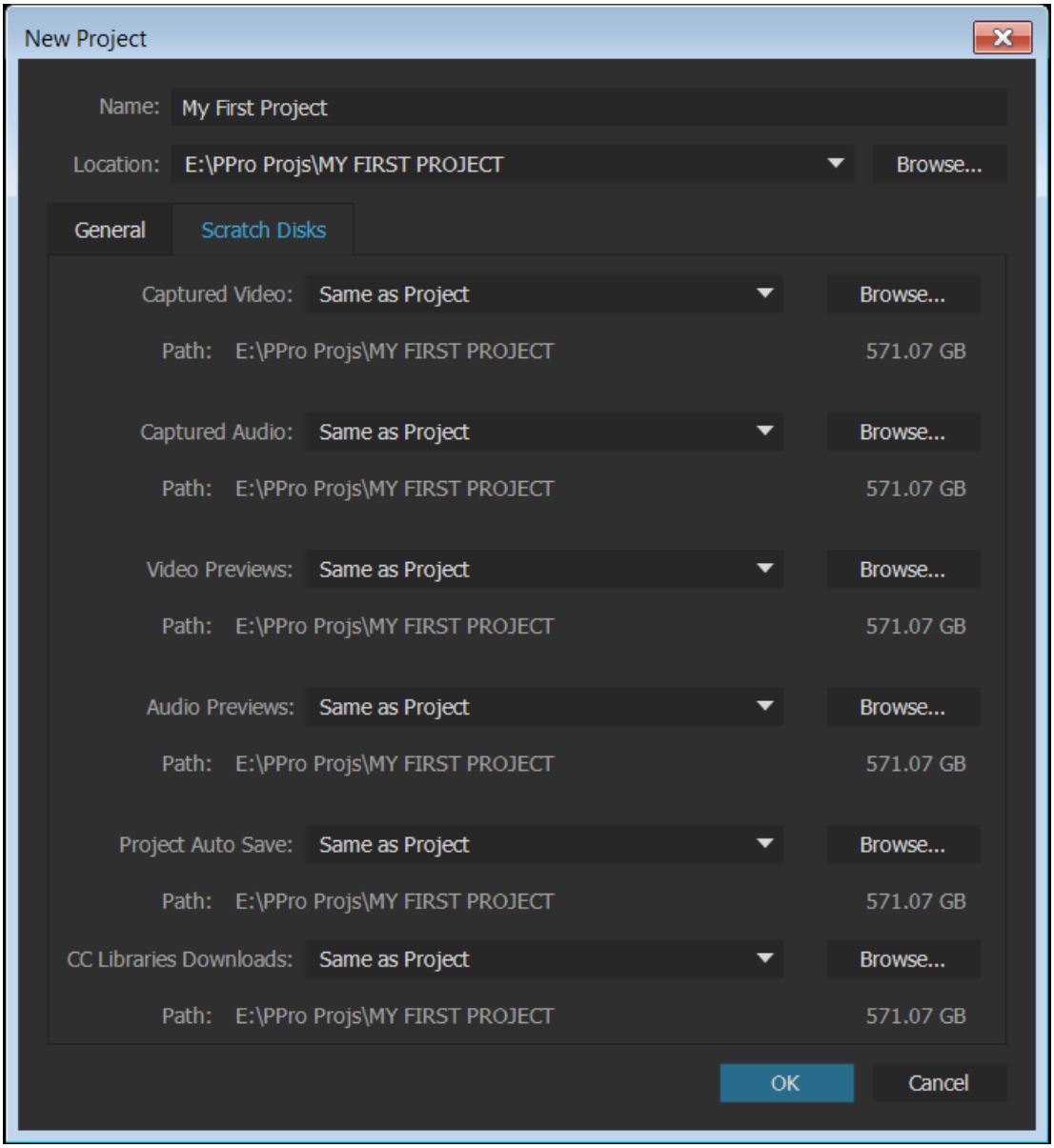
Premiere Pro is a non-destructive editor, meaning it does not alter any of your original files. Instead it references them and renders a whole new video when you finish. If any of these files are moved or renamed, Premiere gets angry and demands to know where you’ve put them. If Premiere asks for a file and you have six with the same name, you’ll have no way of knowing which one Premiere wants.

STARTING A NEW PROJECT

1. Open Premiere Pro . Under **New**, select the **Project** icon. This will open the New Project Dialog.

2. Click **Browse** and select the folder you created for this project. Give the project a unique name and then select the **Scratch Disks** tab.

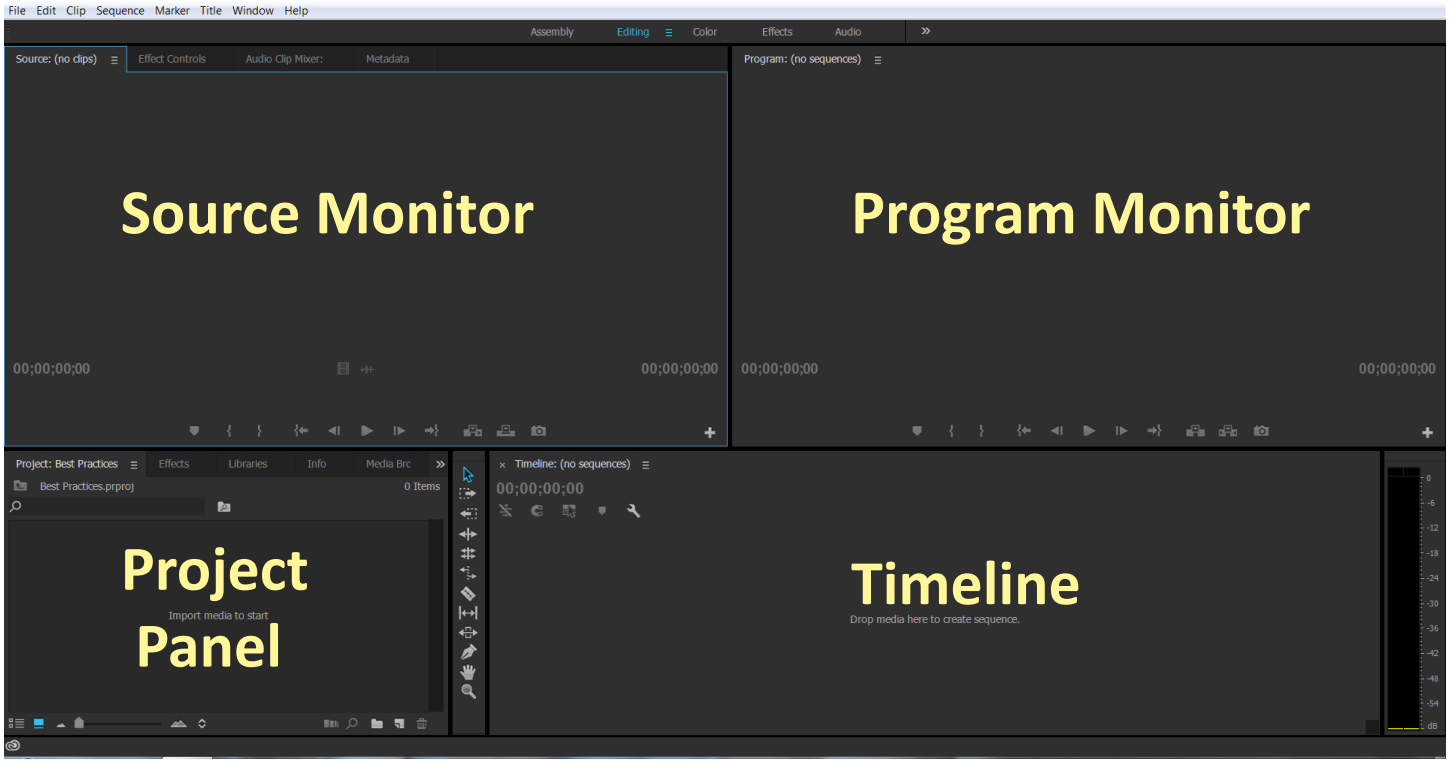
3. Go down the column and set every path to **Same as Project**, then hit **OK**.



WHY?

Scratch disks store all of the temporary files Premiere creates as you work. The default setting usually stores them on the same drive as Premiere, which can slow performance or simply waste drive space. Having all of your scratch files in your project folder will also will make them easier to delete when archiving your project.

WELCOME TO PREMIERE PRO



ANATOMY OF THE WORKSPACE

Source Monitor - This is where you will preview clips to make selections for editing. The **Effect Controls** tab will allow you to adjust any effects you have added.

Program Monitor - This is where you will view your work.

Project Panel - This is where you will import all of the media you will be using. The **Effects** tab is where you will find all of the effects and transitions. Stay the hell out of the **Media Browser**. Just trust me. Until you're a more advanced editor it will cause more problems than it will solve.

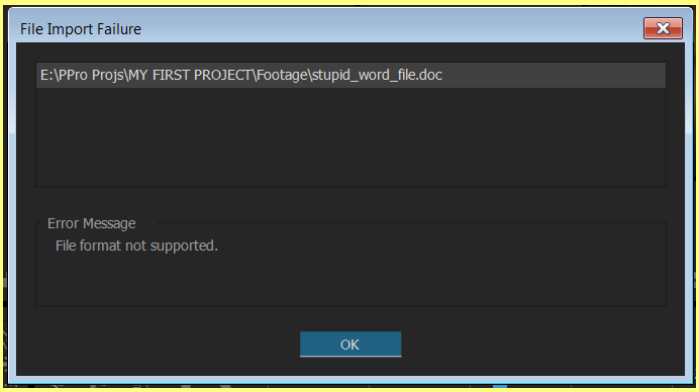
Timeline - This is where most of the actual work gets done. Clips lie left to right much in the same way physical film would lie across a flatbed editor. The edited video segment created here is called a **Sequence**.

IMPORTING ASSETS

To import footage:
Double click inside the **Project Panel**. You will be prompted to locate all of the assets you wish to import. Select the files you want and click **OK**. You can import an entire folder by selecting it and choosing **Import Folder**. All of the subfolders will be imported as well.

Seriously, stay out of the **Media Browser**.

File Import Failure



When importing a folder you may get a **File Import Failure** message. This usually means the folder you're importing contains files that cannot be edited by Premiere Pro, like text documents. Ignore this message and click **OK**.

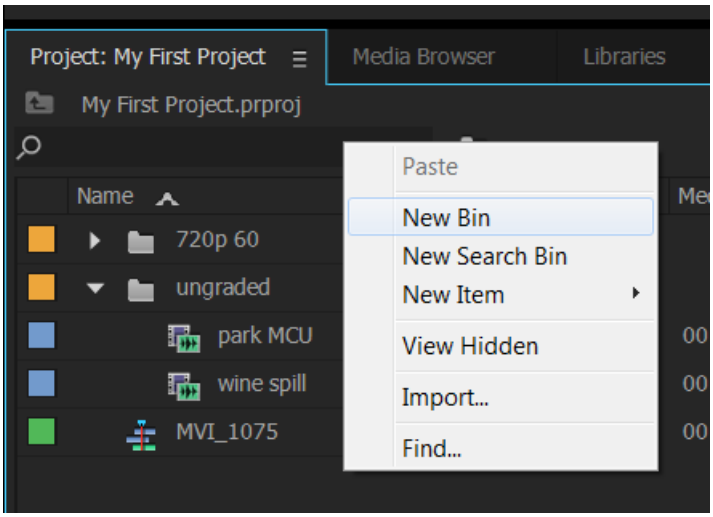
ORGANIZING ASSETS

Files can be organized in folders called **Bins**. Files can be renamed without affecting the name of the source file on your hard drive.

To create a new bin:
Right click inside the **Project Panel** and select **New Bin**.

To rename a file:
Click directly on the file's name.

To move a file:
Drag on the file's icon. Bins may be moved into other bins.



Save Often

All editing programs crash, and Premiere Pro is no exception. A healthy level of distrust will serve you well.

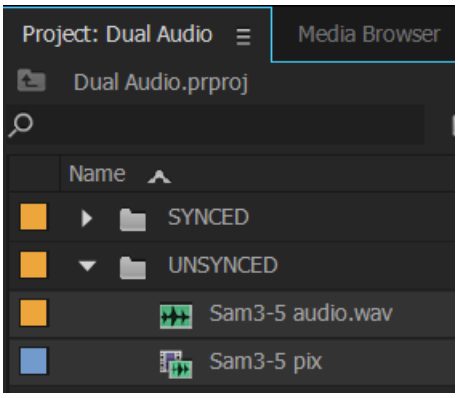
Click **File > Save**

One Last Thing - Syncing Dual Audio

DSLRs are an inexpensive way to get great looking video, but they sound god-awful. The most common way to overcome this is to record separate audio and synchronize in post. By using the camera's audio as a reference, Premiere can automatically sync the new audio and remove the existing sound in one step. It is imperative to **SYNCHRONIZE YOUR FOOTAGE BEFORE EDITING.**

To sync dual audio:

1. First we need to organize. Create two bins, one for your **UNSYNCED** footage and one for the **SYNCED** clips.

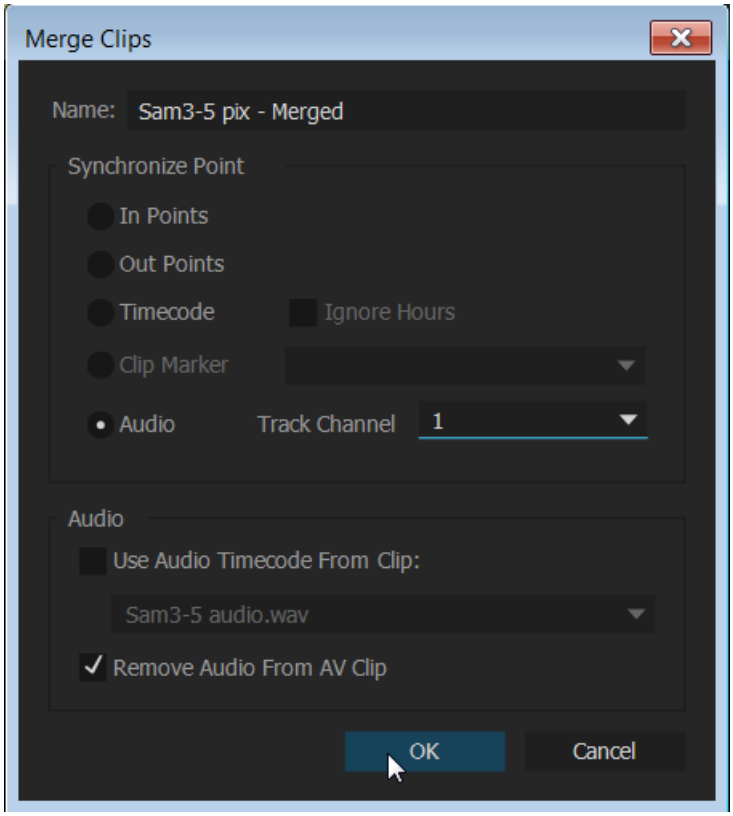


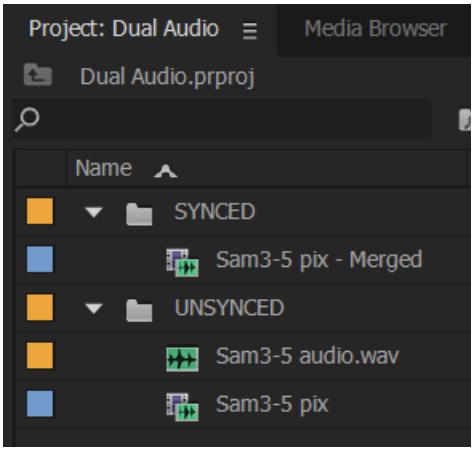
2. In the Project Panel, select an unsynced video clip and its companion audio clip.

3. Right click on the icon for your clip and choose **Merge Clips...**

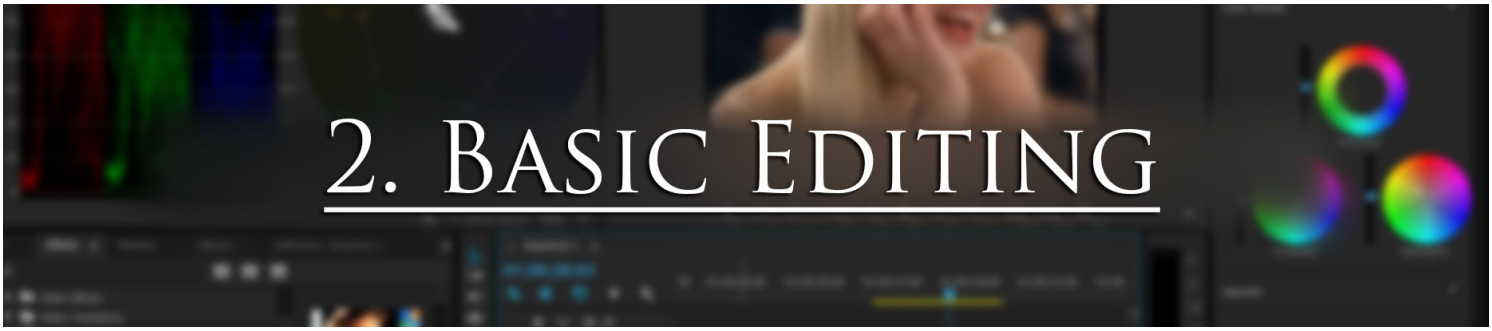
   The Merge Clips dialogue will open. Check to make sure **Synchronize Point** is set to **Audio** and that **Remove Audio from AV Clip** is selected.

   Click **OK**.





4. Put all of your merged clips in the SYNCED bin. Close the UNSYNCED bin and leave it closed. Build your project out of merged clips only.



2. Basic Editing

1. Select the first clip and double click its icon. The clip will appear in the **Source Monitor**.

2. Preview the clip in the source monitor to find the portion you wish to use. You can play the clip with the following keyboard commands:

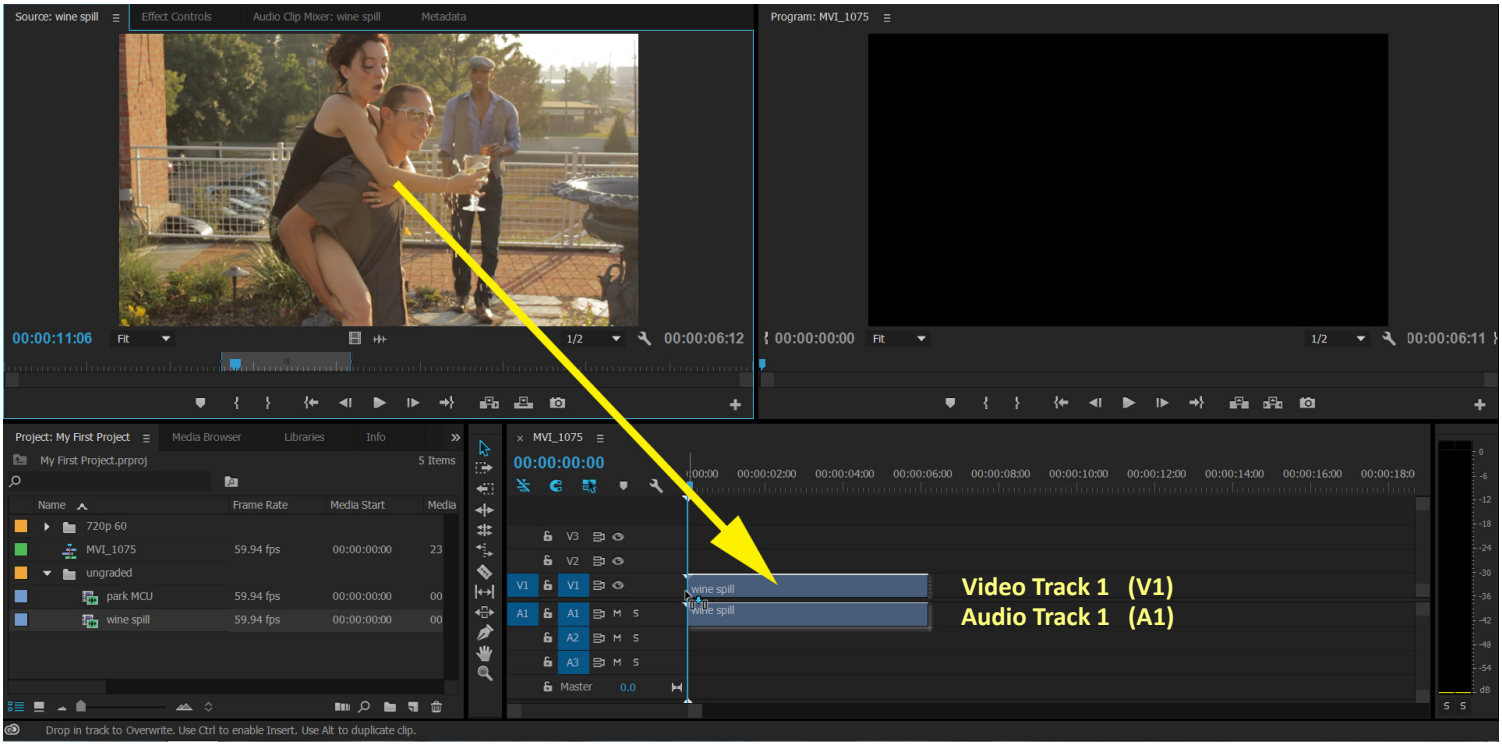
Space = play / pause
J = play backward
K = pause
L = play forward
Right Arrow = forward one frame
Left Arrow = backward one frame

i = set in point
o = set out point

Or you can drag the blue playhead below the monitor:

3. Set an **In Point** and an **Out Point** to define the portion of the clip you wish to use. Move the playhead to the frame you wish to begin with and press **i**. Then move the playhead to the frame you wish to end with and press **o**. The in point and out point become visible on the source monitor:

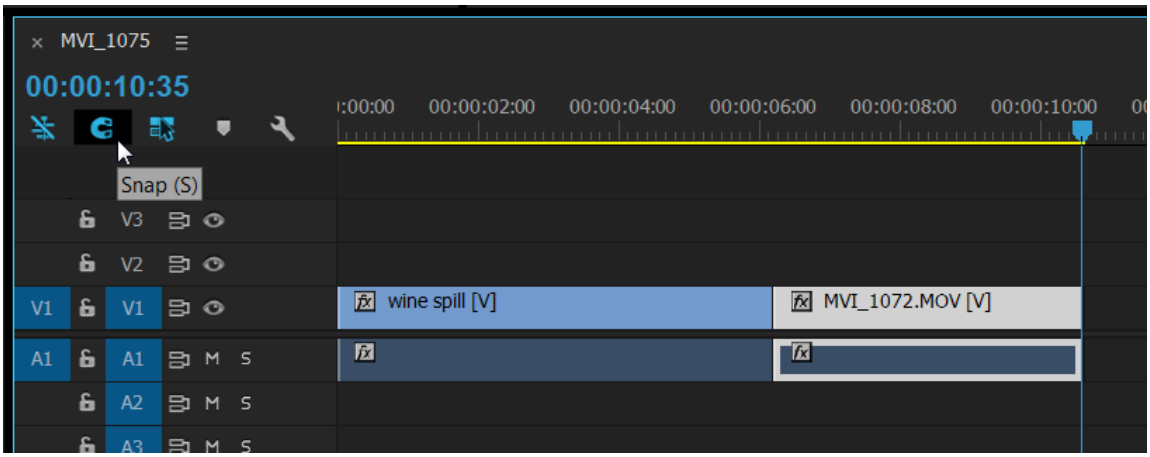
4. Click anywhere within the video on the **Source Monitor** and drag it to the **Timeline**. This will create a new **sequence**. For now we want to put all of our video clips on **Video Track 1**, the bottommost track:



ROOKIE MISTAKE: Wrong Sequence Settings

The first clip you drag to the timeline will determine the frame rate and resolution of your sequence. If you plan to open with audio or title cards over black, you should first drag a clip of your regular footage to the timeline just to establish sequence settings. You can delete the clip as soon as the sequence is created.

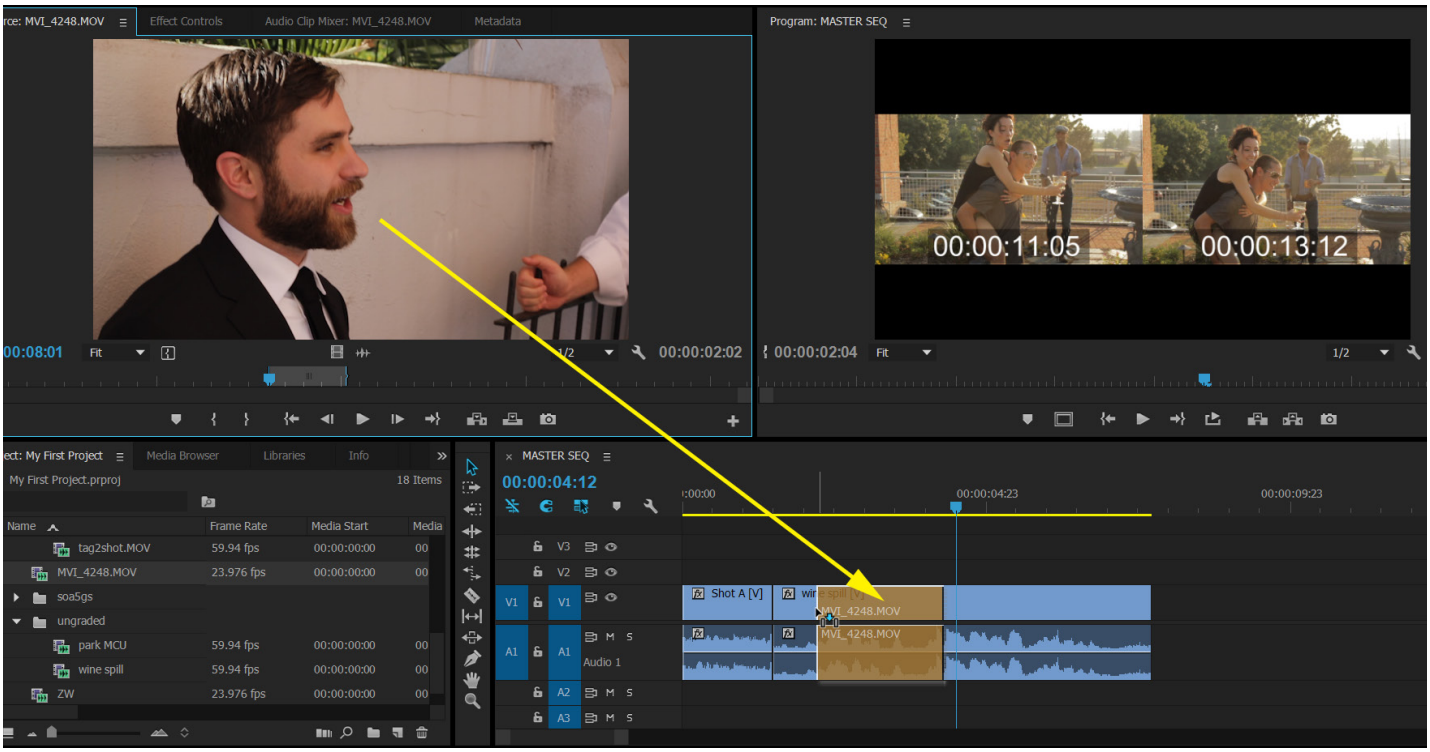
5. Repeat steps 1-4 with a different clip. Drag it to the end of the first clip in the timeline. As long as the **snapping toggle** (S) is enabled, the second clip should snap to the end of the first once it gets close.



6. You can always view your progress in the **Program Monitor** by playing it in the **Timeline**.

INSERT AND OVERTWRITE EDITS

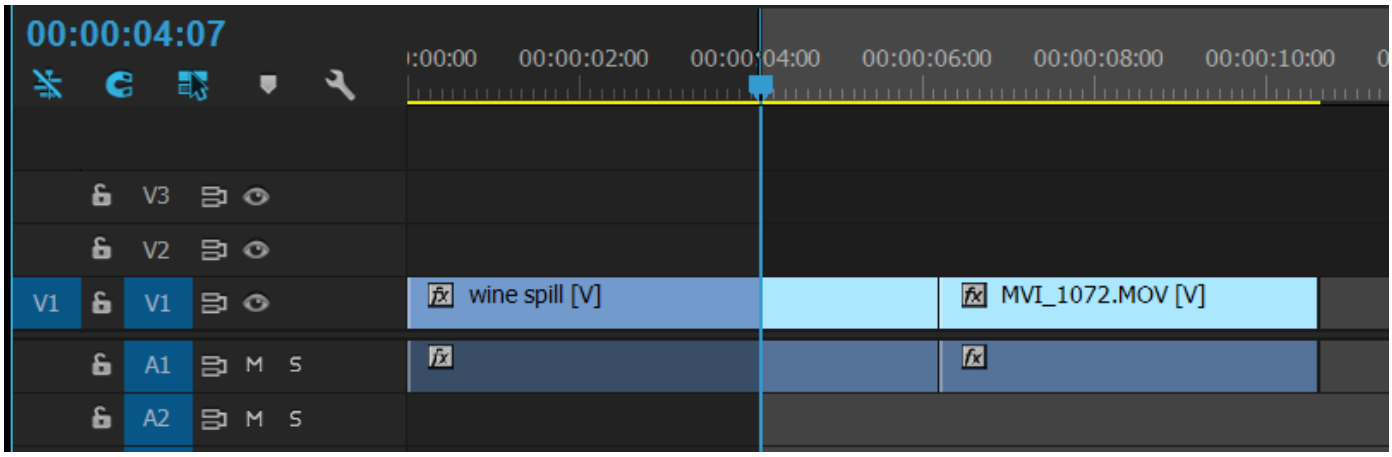
If you drag a clip to an occupied part of the timeline, your new footage will replace the existing footage. This is called an **overwrite edit**. (I've turned my new clip orange to make it more visible.)



An **insert edit** is one that pushes existing footage further down the timeline instead of replacing it.

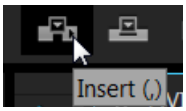
To make an insert edit:

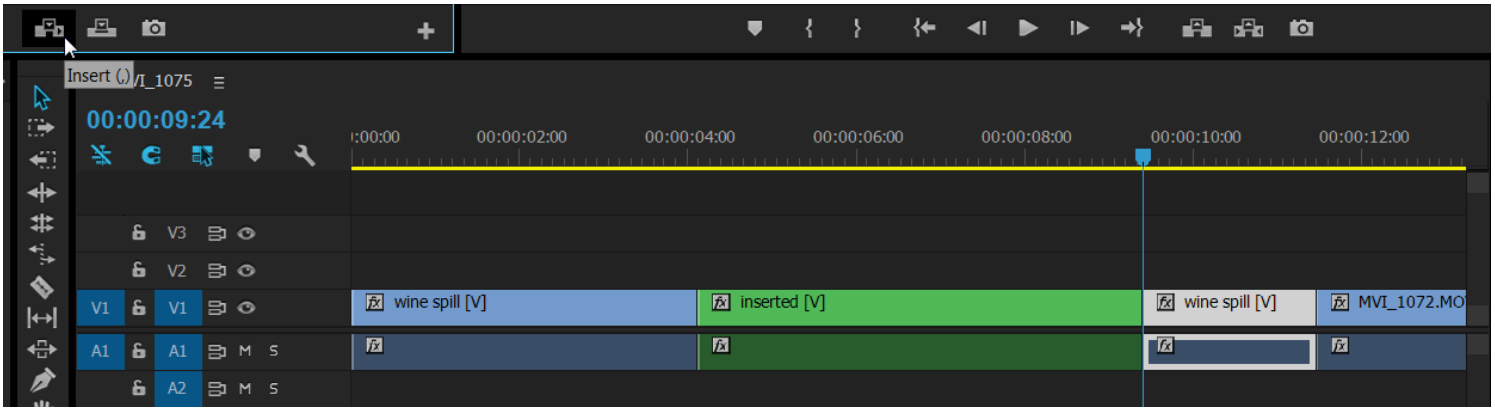
1. First find the spot on the timeline where you want to insert new footage and make an in point by hitting the **i** key.



2. Mark **in** and **out points** on your new clip in the source monitor with the **i** and **o** keys.

3. Hit the insert button at the bottom of the source monitor:



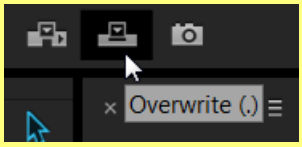


(I've turned my inserted footage green to make it more visible.)

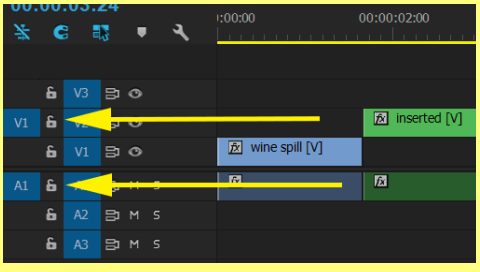
Three and Four Point Editing

Three point editing allows you to work with any three in or out points. You can define the entire source clip and just a starting or ending point on the timeline; you can define how much of the timeline you want to use and just a starting or ending point from the source material.

Four point editing allows you to set in and out points on both the source clip and the timeline. You will be given the option to ignore one point or alter the speed of the source clip to make it fit. Four point edits only work if you hit the **overwrite button** - it's found at the bottom of the source monitor right next to the **insert button**.



Be aware that footage added via insert or overwrite buttons will appear on video track 1 and audio track 1. If you wish to send them to different tracks, move the **source patchers** (the blue V1 / A1 boxes at the far left of the timeline) to the desired track.



Rearranging Clips

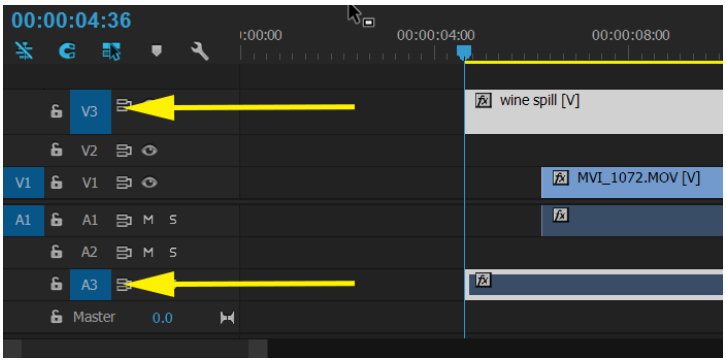
Clips in the timeline can be cut, copied, pasted and moved around just like words in a text document. The easiest way to do this is by simply dragging clips around. Alternatively:

To cut a clip: Right click on the clip in the timeline > Cut

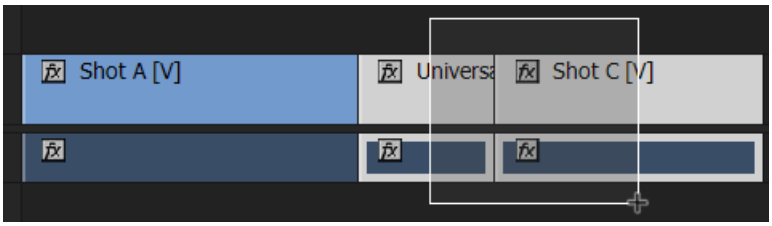
To copy a clip: Right click on the clip in the timeline > Copy

To paste a clip: Hit **CMD+V** (ctrl+v on pc)

Be aware that when you paste a clip, it will be placed on the tracks you have **targeted** (see yellow arrows) with its first frame at the playhead.



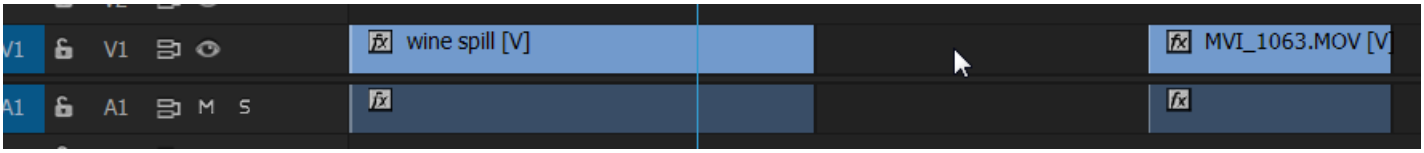
You can also select multiple clips by dragging a rectangle around them. The selected clips can be cut / pasted / moved as a group.



You can also take two clips on the timeline and swap their positions:

To swap two clips: Hold **CMD + OPT** (ctrl+alt on pc) and drag one clip to another's position.

To delete a clip: Select the clip and hit **Delete**. This will leave a gap in the timeline which you may not want:

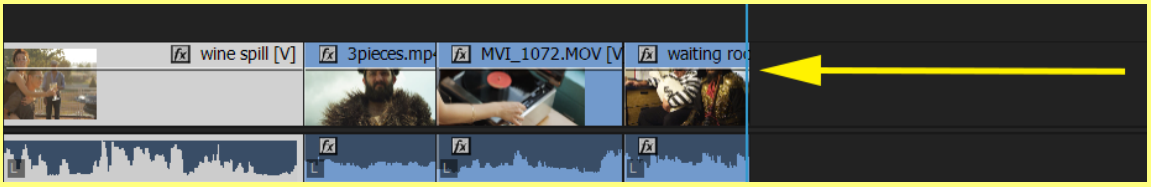


To remove a gap: Right click in the gap and select **Ripple Delete**:

To delete a clip without leaving a gap: Right click on the clip and select **Ripple Delete.**

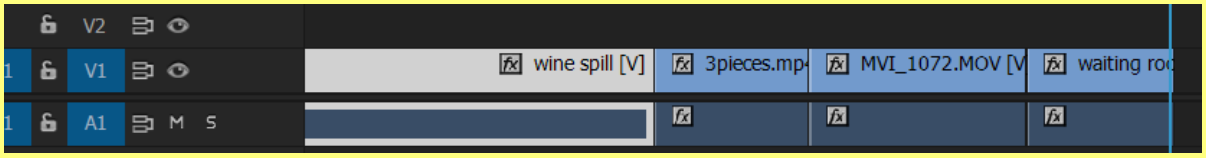
ROOKIE MISTAKE: Moving the Opacity Line

One thing to watch out for when dragging clips is the **opacity line**:

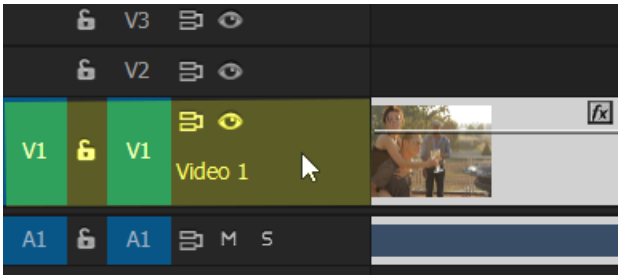


The line can be dragged vertically to increase or decrease the opacity of a clip. If your clip looks really dark, you probably moved the opacity line when dragging the clip.

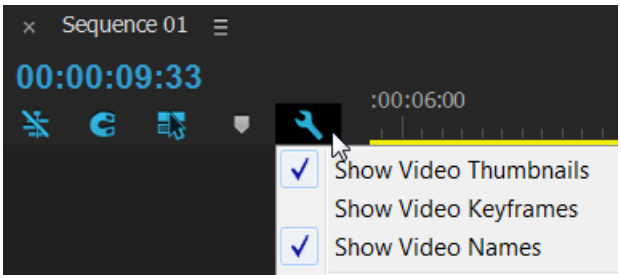
This is one reason I prefer to work with my video tracks collapsed:



To expand or collapse tracks:
Place your mouse cursor in the highlighted area below. Scroll the mouse wheel up to expand, down to collapse.



To remove the opacity line:
Click the settings icon in the timeline (the little wrench). Deselect **Show Video Keyframes.**



Navigating the Timeline

You will frequently find it necessary to zoom in or out of the timeline or to navigate to a specific part of your sequence. The following shortcuts will make your job easier:

+ = zoom in on timeline*
- = zoom out of timeline

\ = view entire sequence in timeline

S = snapping toggle

Home = move playhead to first frame
End = move playhead to last frame
↓ = move playhead to next cut point
↑ = move playhead to previous cut point

* zooming is actually the equals sign (=) and minus (-) keys, but plus and minus are easier to remember.

Trimming Clips

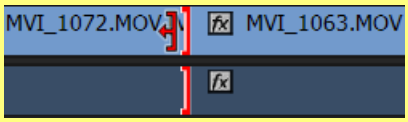
Clips can be lengthened or shortened by **trimming** their ends.

To trim a clip in the timeline: Click and one end and drag left or right.

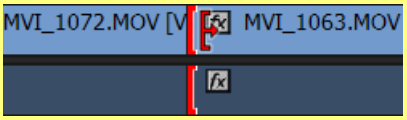
Learn More

When your mouse hovers over a cut point, it will turn into this symbol: 

The direction of the centered arrow indicates which clip will be trimmed:

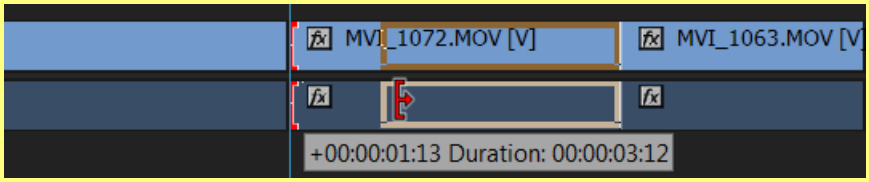


The out point of the left clip will be trimmed.



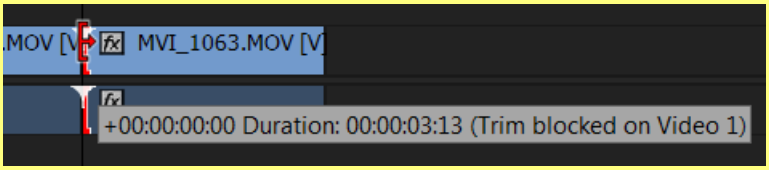
The in point of the right clip will be trimmed.

You'll be able to see your trim as you drag:



But it will leave a gap:

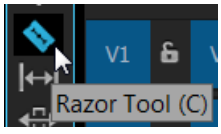
And you won't be able to trim into a neighboring clip:



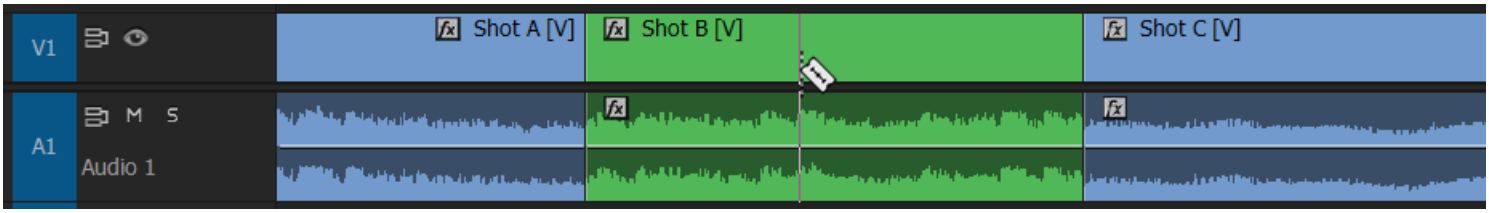
There are tools that allow us to trim our footage without disrupting neighboring clips or leaving gaps, but we'll get to them in chapter four.

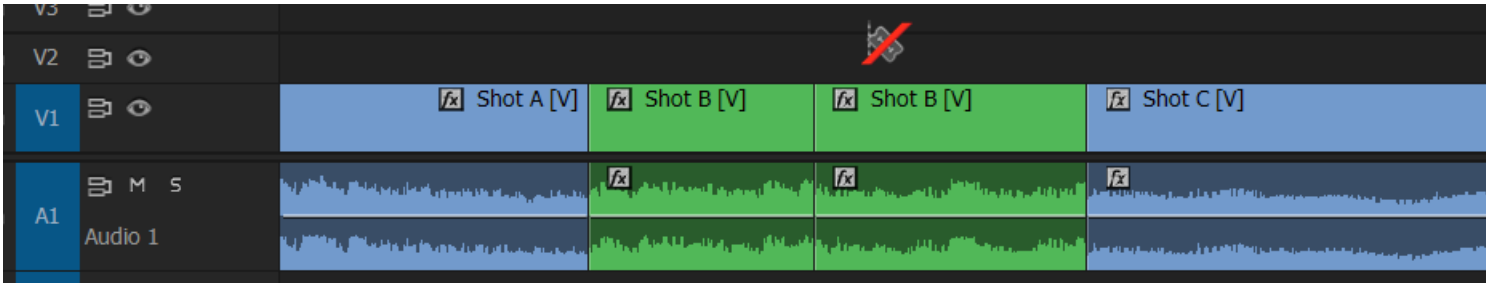
Cutting a Clip in Two

Between the Project Panel and the Timeline is a row of trimming tools. Find the one that looks like a Razor:

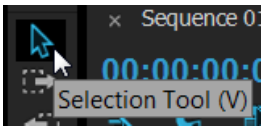


The Razor Tool:
The razor tool will cut one clip into two clips. To remember the keyboard shortcut, think "C for Cut."





IMPORTANT:
After you have cut a clip in two, you should immediately return to the **Selection Tool** (the arrow). Otherwise you will shred your footage instead of trimming and moving it.



Useful Keyboard Shortcuts

CMD+Z = UNDO - this is the single most useful key command (ctrl+z on pc)

space = play / pause
J = play backward*
K = pause
L = play forward*

→ = forward one frame
← = backward one frame
↓ = move playhead to next cut point
↑ = move playhead to previous cut point

Home = move playhead to first frame
End = move playhead to last frame

S = snapping toggle

i = set in point
o = set out point

S = snapping toggle

CMD+X = cut (ctrl+x on pc)
CMD+C = copy (ctrl+c on pc)
CMD+V = paste (ctrl+v on pc)

+ = zoom in on timeline**
- = zoom out of timeline
\ = view entire sequence

* Pressing J or L multiple times will increase play speed.
** technically it's the equals sign key

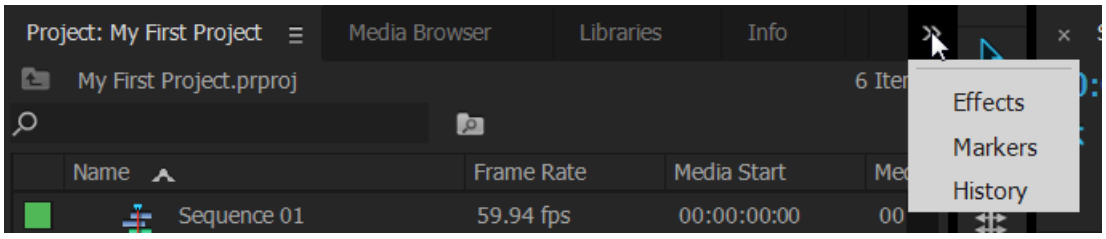
JUST BECAUSE YOU CAN DOESN'T MEAN YOU SHOULD.

Transitions are a way to bridge one clip to the next, and Premiere Pro has dozens to choose from.

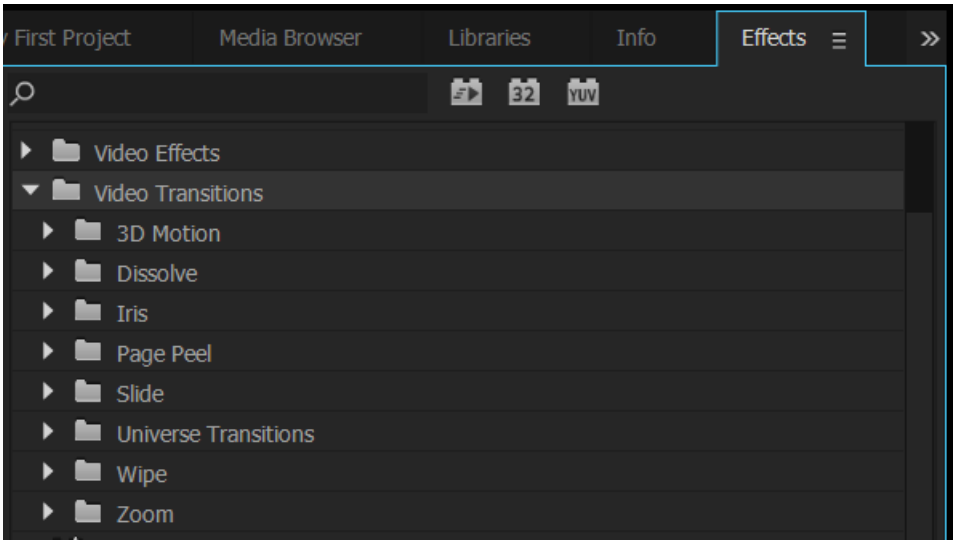
Beginning editors tend to get crazy when they see the variety of eye-catching transitions available. The result is a video that looks like a bad powerpoint presentation. So until you are a more experienced editor, use dissolves sparingly and stay the hell out of the wipes.

Applying Transitions

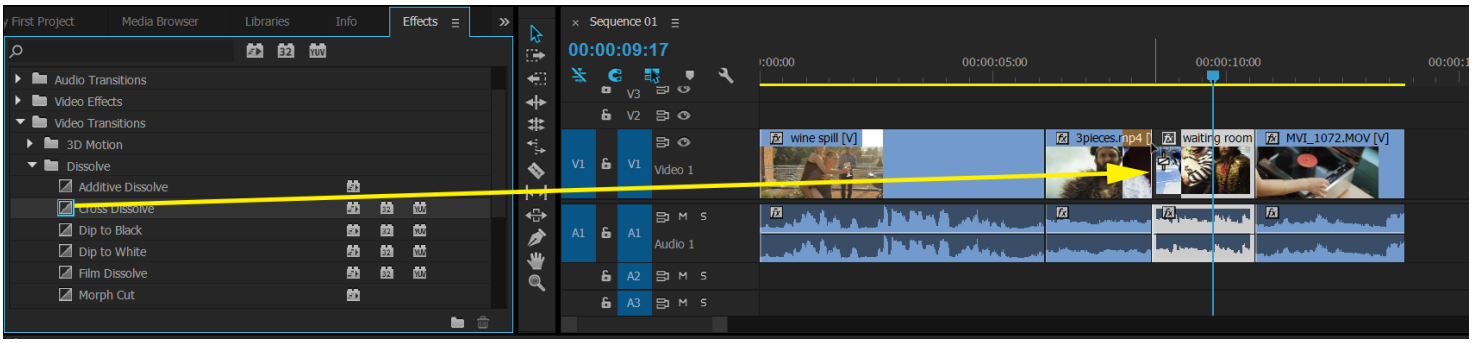
Transitions are found in the **Effects Tab** in the **Project Panel**. If the effects tab is not visible, click on the arrow in the upper right corner of the project panel and select **Effects**.



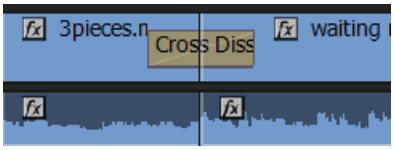
Inside the effects tab will be a folder labeled **Video Transitions**, and inside that are a bunch of subfolders filled with garish, tacky wipes. (3D Motion, Iris, Page Peel, Slide, Wipe and Zoom are all just different types of wipe.)



To apply a transition: drag the transition from the effects tab to the cut point in the timeline.



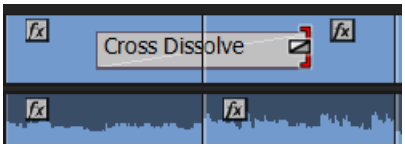
It will leave a gray box indicating the type and length of transition in place.



To delete a transition: Select the transition and hit delete. The selected transition will be highlighted.

To replace a transition with another: Drag the new transition to the cut point. There is no need to delete the first one.

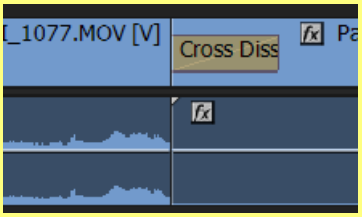
To change the duration of a transition: Drag the edge of the transition left or right. It will stay centered on your cut point.



ROOKIE MISTAKE: Transitions Without Handles

In order to have a 30 frame transition, each clip needs to overlap the cut point by 15 additional frames. These extra frames are called **handles.**

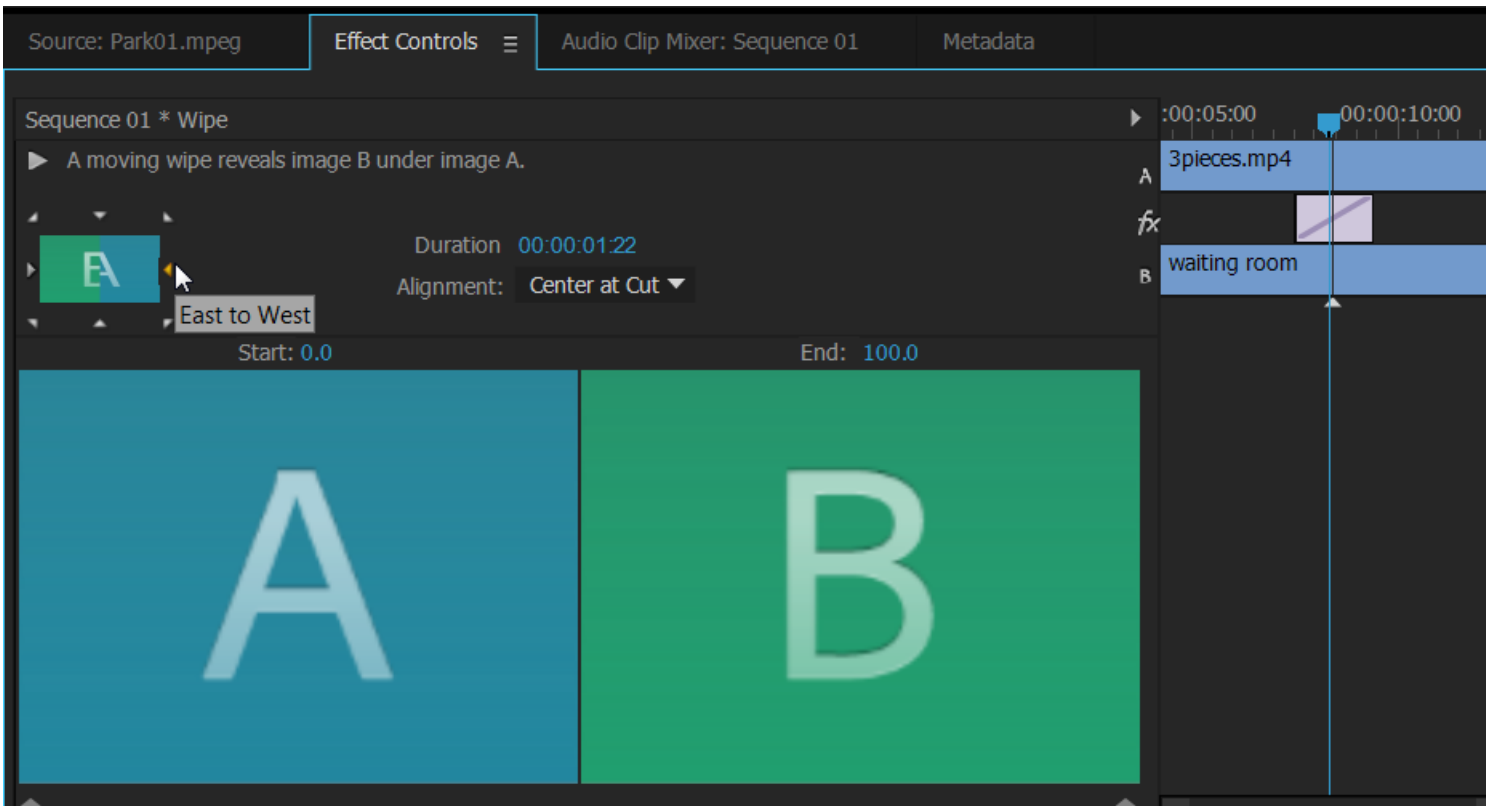
If you can only apply a transition to one side of my cut point: One of your source clips does not have any extra frames beyond the cut point. If you use the first or last frame of a clip, Premiere will put the transition on the other side of the cut.



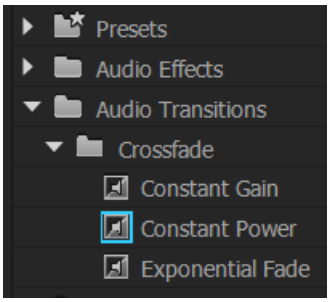
If you get a warning message and weird scratchy lines: You have no extra footage on either side of the cut point. Premiere has compensated by repeating the last (or first) frame to fill in the missing footage. I actually like this effect for flashbacks and will recreate it using freeze-frames.

Fine Tuning Your Transitions

To change the parameters of your transition:
Select the transition, then open the **Effect Controls Tab**, which is found in the source monitor. There you should be able to control speed and direction of wipes, or whatever parameters are specific to your transition.



Audio Transitions



We'll get to audio mixing in a separate chapter. For now all you need to know is when to use each of the three types of crossfade.

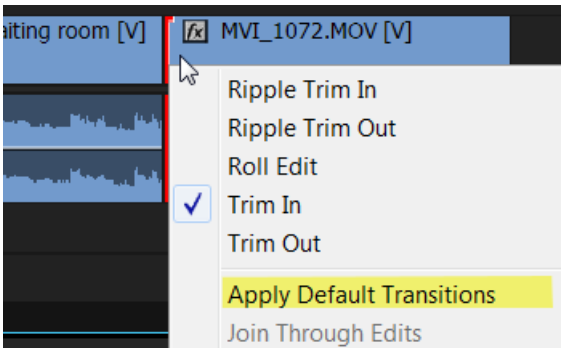
Constant Gain - use when your audio clip fades in or out to silence.

Constant Power - use when your audio clip fades into another clip.

Exponential Fade - use on music tracks, especially on long fades.

Quick & Dirty Dissolve

To quickly dissolve picture and fade audio:
Right click on a cut point and select **Apply Default Transitions**. Premiere will add a 30 frame dissolve and a 30 frame constant power crossfade.



When to Use Transitions

Cross Dissolves: Cross dissolves are good for showing the passage of time. For example, if we have a shot of someone sitting on a bus stop bench with the sun directly overhead and then we slowly dissolve to a shot of that person sprawled across the bench with the sun low on the horizon, the audience understands that time has passed.

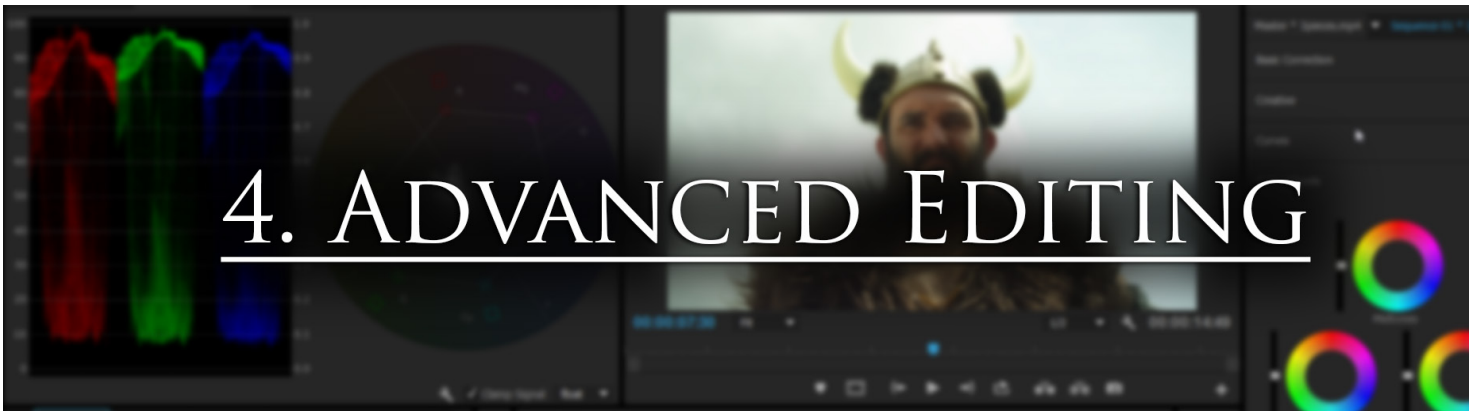
Cross dissolves at the beginning or end of our sequence will give us a **fade in** or a **fade to black**.

Dip to Black: This will briefly fade to black and then fade back in on your next shot. It works best when you want to show that time has passed but a dissolve seems too abrupt. Also works great if your protagonist has been knocked out and then regains consciousness.

Dip to White: Similar. You'll see this a lot in commercials when they want us to think something magical is coming. Also good for transitioning into flashbacks, visions and near-death experiences.

Wipe: Wipes can be used to show a change of location, but unless you're George Lucas or Akira Kurosawa you probably shouldn't. A good test is to imagine every wipe accompanied by an announcer shouting, "MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE RANCH..." If that seems a little heavy-handed, your wipe probably is too.

Everything Else: Okay, pretty much everything else is a variation of the wipe and for the most part should be avoided in narrative fiction. The problem is that they call too much attention to themselves in most situations. If your sequence has a lot of chaos or kinetic energy, they may work just fine. You'll see them a lot in shorter pieces, music videos, commercials and musical montages. And they're actually pretty great on title cards, especially lower thirds.



4. Advanced Editing

Hopefully you have had a chance to play with Premiere and you feel comfortable with what we've covered so far. Now let's get awesome.

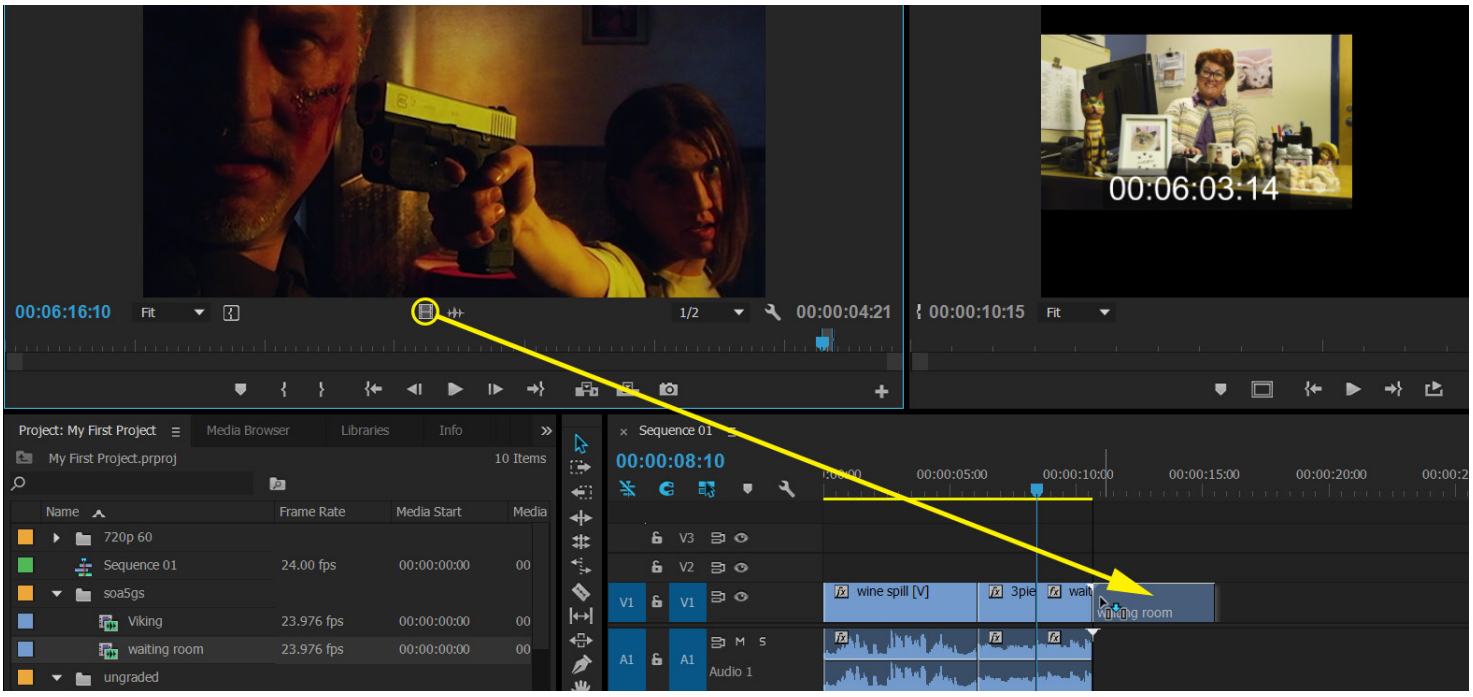
Separating Video and Audio

There are a number of ways to work with some tracks while leaving others unaffected.

To use just the audio or video from a clip:

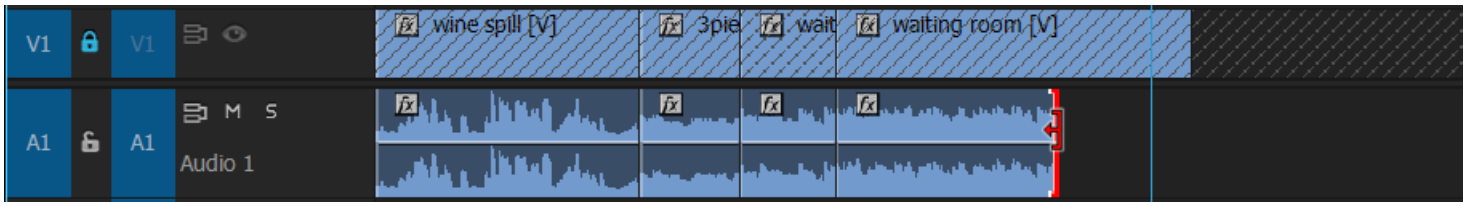
Centered below the source monitor are two icons that look like a frame of film and an audio waveform:

Mark your in and out points, then drag one of these to the timeline.



You can lock a track so that it cannot be altered. Locked tracks have gray hash marks.

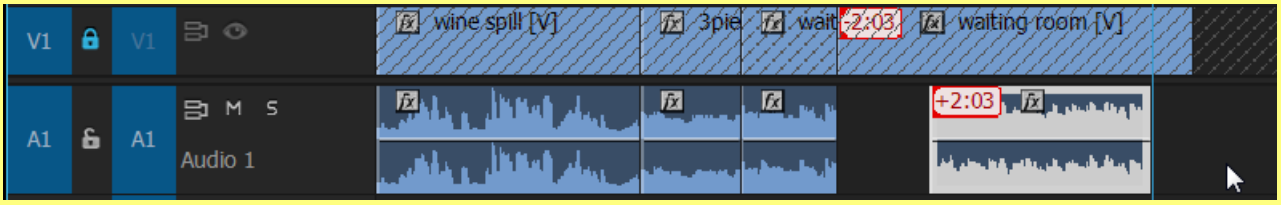
To lock a track: Click on the padlock icon: 



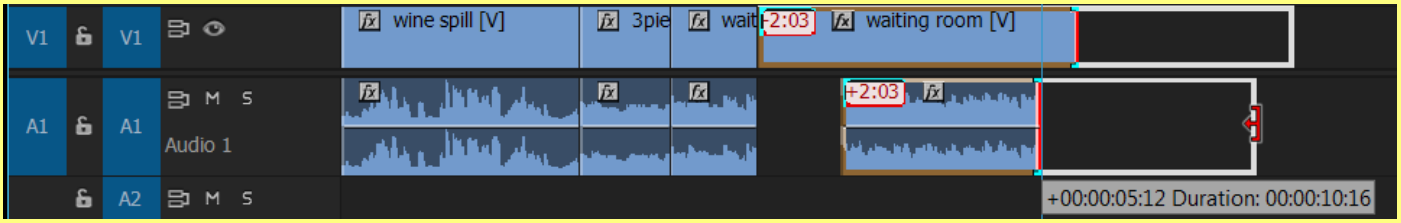
ROOKIE MISTAKE: Losing Sync with Locked Tracks

If you lock just the video or audio of a clip, be careful not to move its counterpart. It's very easy to accidentally drag part of a clip while trimming. Moving just the audio or video portion will cause the clip to go **out of sync**.

Clips that have gone out of sync will be indicated with red and white boxes. The clip below has gone two seconds and three frames out of sync:

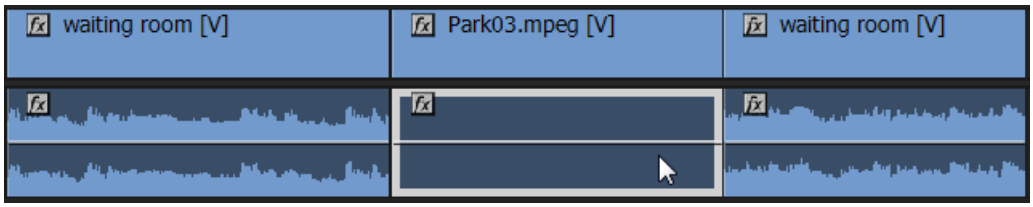


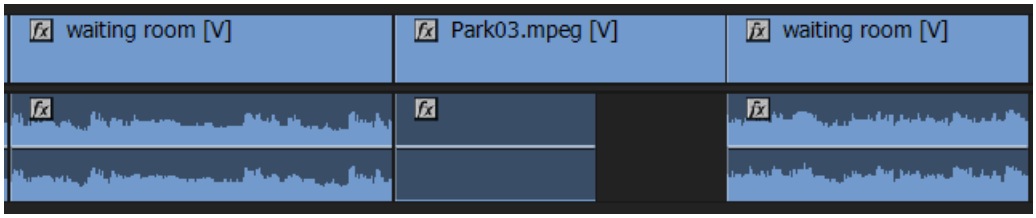
Be sure to drag the clip back into sync before unlocking its mate. Once you unlock they will move and trim together as one clip again. One horrible, asynchronous clip...



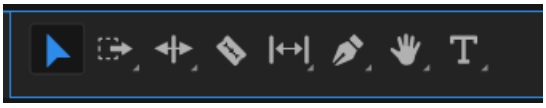
You can also select just the audio or video portion of a clip and then trim, cut, copy or move just that portion. This will be invaluable when we start editing sound.

To select just the audio or video: Hold down the OPT key and select the clip. (ALT on pc)



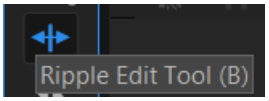


Trim Tools



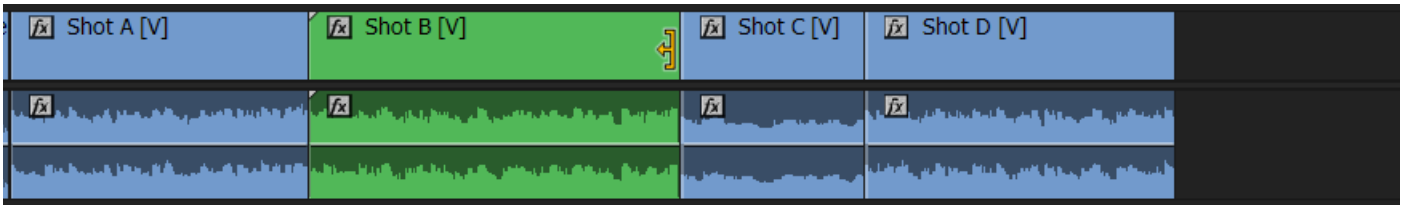
The ability to use trim tools efficiently is what separates the amateurs from the pros. These will drastically speed up your workflow and reduce errors that may go unnoticed until it's too late. The most useful of these is the ripple tool:

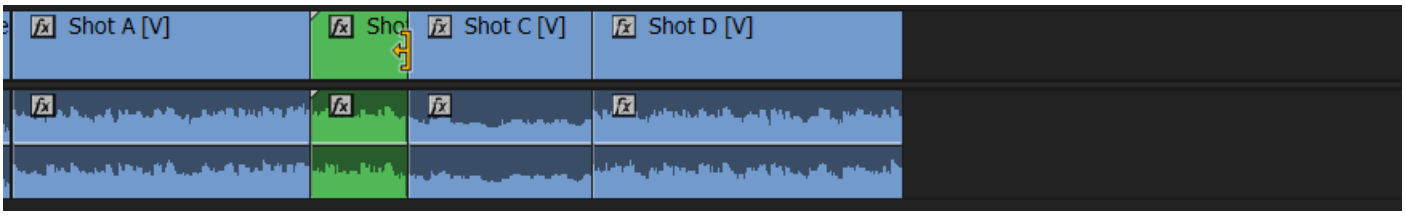
The Ripple Tool:
The ripple tool trims without leaving a gap or eating in to adjacent clips. It does this by taking all of the footage to the right of the cut point and moving it to fit. If it helps, think of the surface of a pond after a pebble has been dropped in. The effect is felt all the way to the end of your sequence.

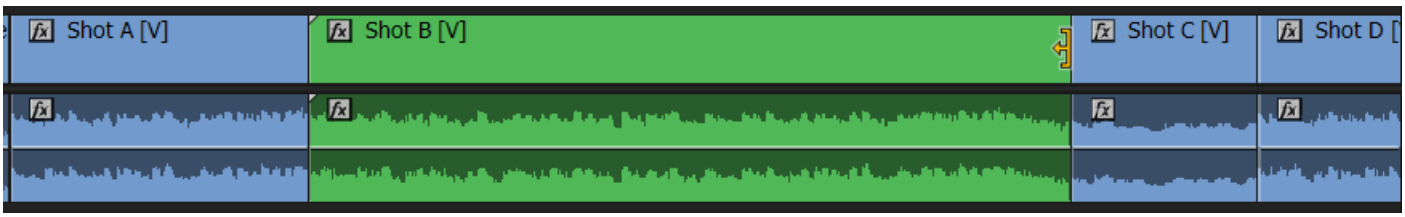


your new best friend

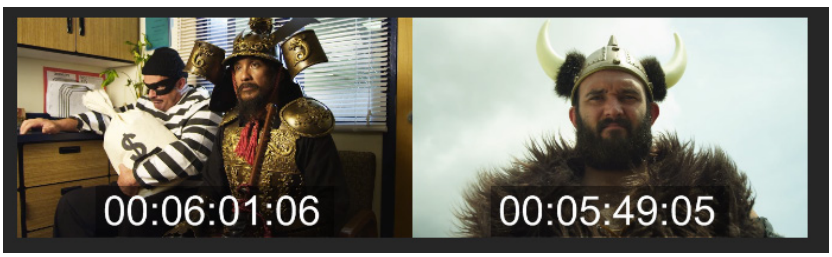
Here I'm rippling the end of the green clip. Note how the two clips after it move to accommodate the changing length of the green one:

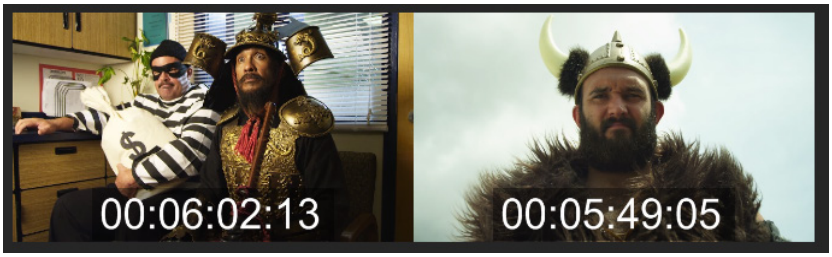




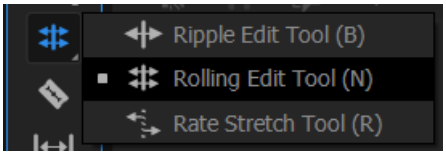


When rippling, the program monitor will show the first frame on each side of your cut point. The frames on the left show the out point of Shot B. The frame with the viking is the in point of Shot C. Note how the viking's time-code does not change.





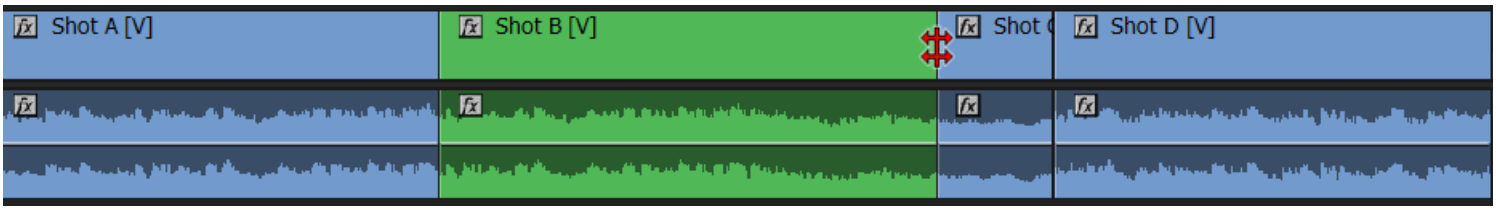
The Roll Tool:
The roll tool moves a cut point. It does this by rippling in one shot in while rippling the adjacent shot out. No other clips are affected. Here, look at the pretty pictures and it will make sense:



Click and hold the ripple tool to select the roll tool.

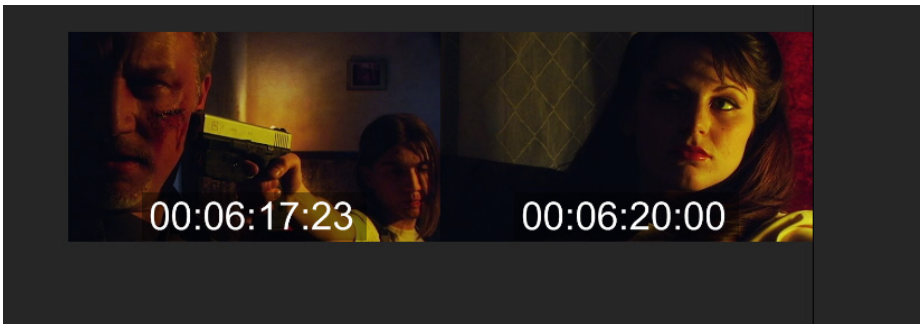
Here is the original position of the cut between shots B and C:

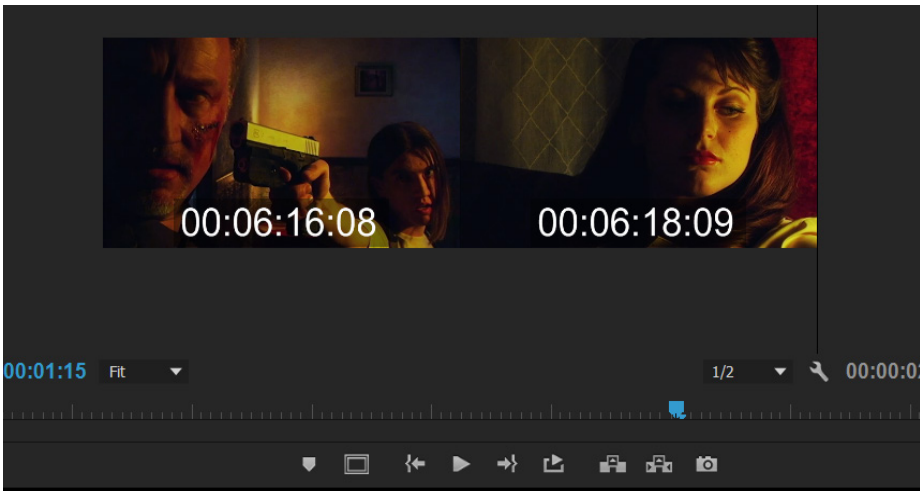
By rolling the cut to the right, we ripple out shot B and ripple in Shot C:



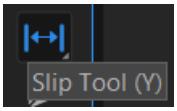
By rolling the cut to the left, we ripple *in* shot B and ripple *out* Shot C:

When rolling, the program monitor will show the first frame on each side of the cut point.





The Slip Tool:
The slip tool allows you to spool through a shot while keeping it in place. It doesn't affect the length or position of the clip, it doesn't affect the surrounding clips, it only changes what portion of the clip you choose to show.



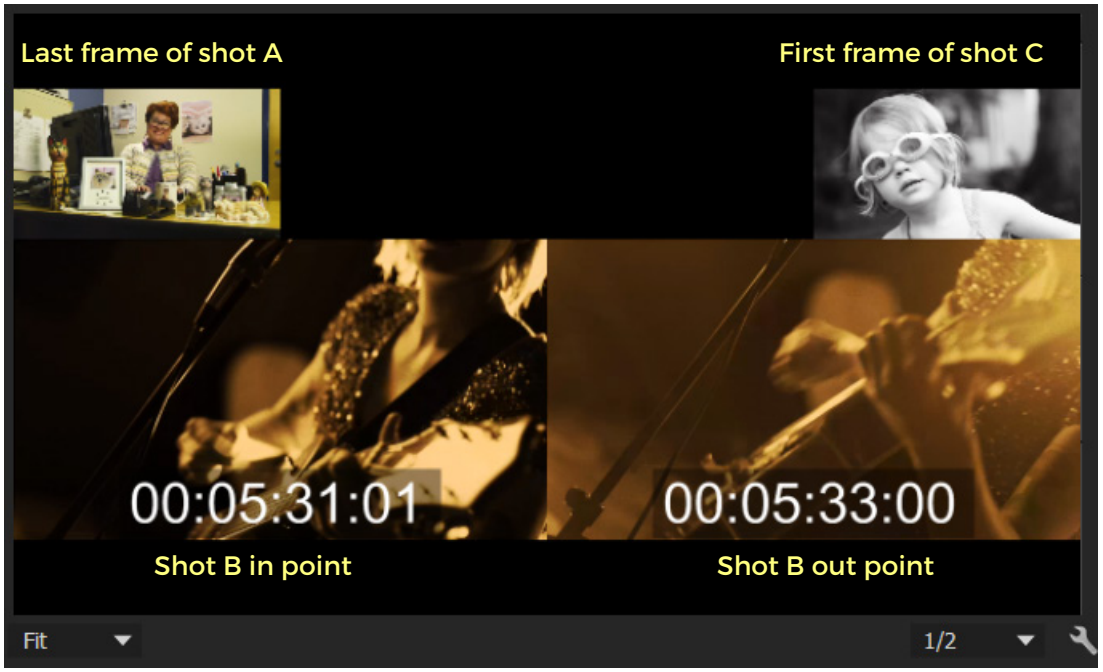
In the timelines below, I slipped shot B to the left by 10 frames. Note that the position and length of shot B does not change:

When slipping, the program monitor shows four frames:

The little ones at the top show the last frame before and the first frame after the slipped clip. *These will not change* - only the slipped clip is affected.

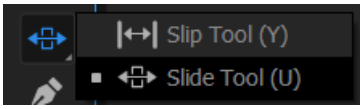
The big ones show the beginning and end of the clip being slipped in place.

Beginning of slip:



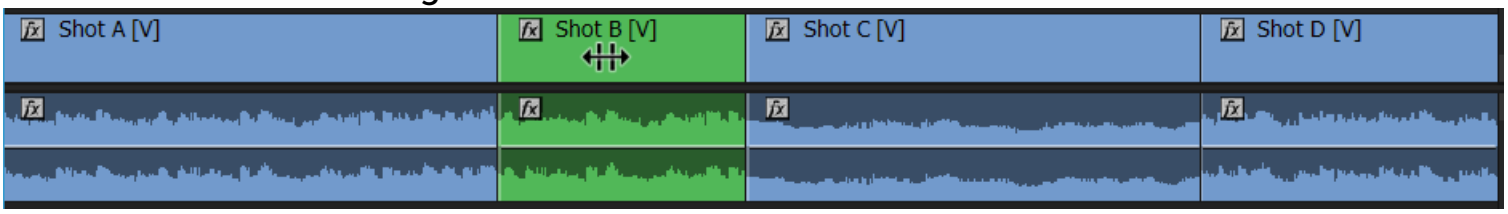
Slipped 10 frames:

The Slide Tool:
The slide tool moves a clip along the timeline without changing the clip in any way. It does this by rippling the adjacent clips to fit.



Click and hold the slip tool to select the slide tool.

Here we see shot B moving around via the slide tool:



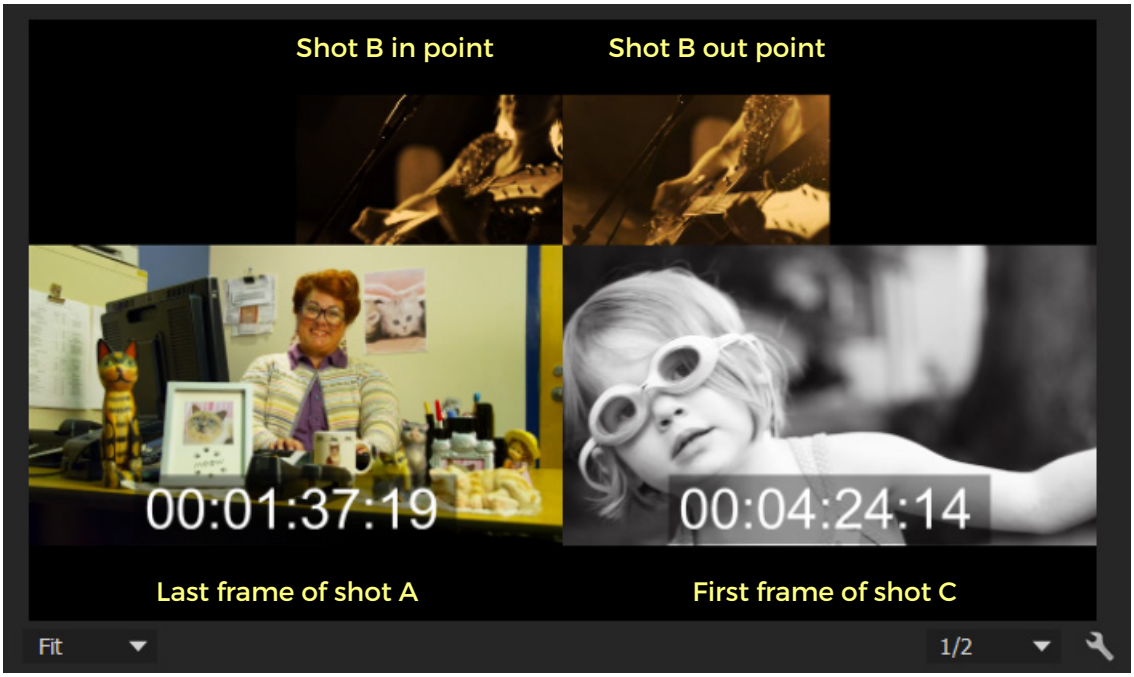
Sliding shot B left ripples shot A in and shot C out:

Sliding B right ripples A out and C in:

When sliding a clip, the program monitor shows four frames:

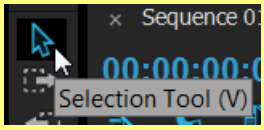
The small ones at the top are the first and last frames of the sliding clip. *These will not change*- the sliding clip always stays exactly the same.

The big ones at the bottom show the last frame before and the first frame after the sliding clip.



ROOKIE MISTAKE: Leaving a Trim Tool On

When you have finished using a trim tool, hit **V** to return to the **selection tool** (the arrow). This is a super-important habit to get into. If you leave a tool on, you will trim the next clip you try to drag. If you're lucky, you'll only cut the hell out of your footage:



This sucks but at least it's visible on the timeline

If you're unlucky, you'll slip or slide a clip and not notice until it's too late.

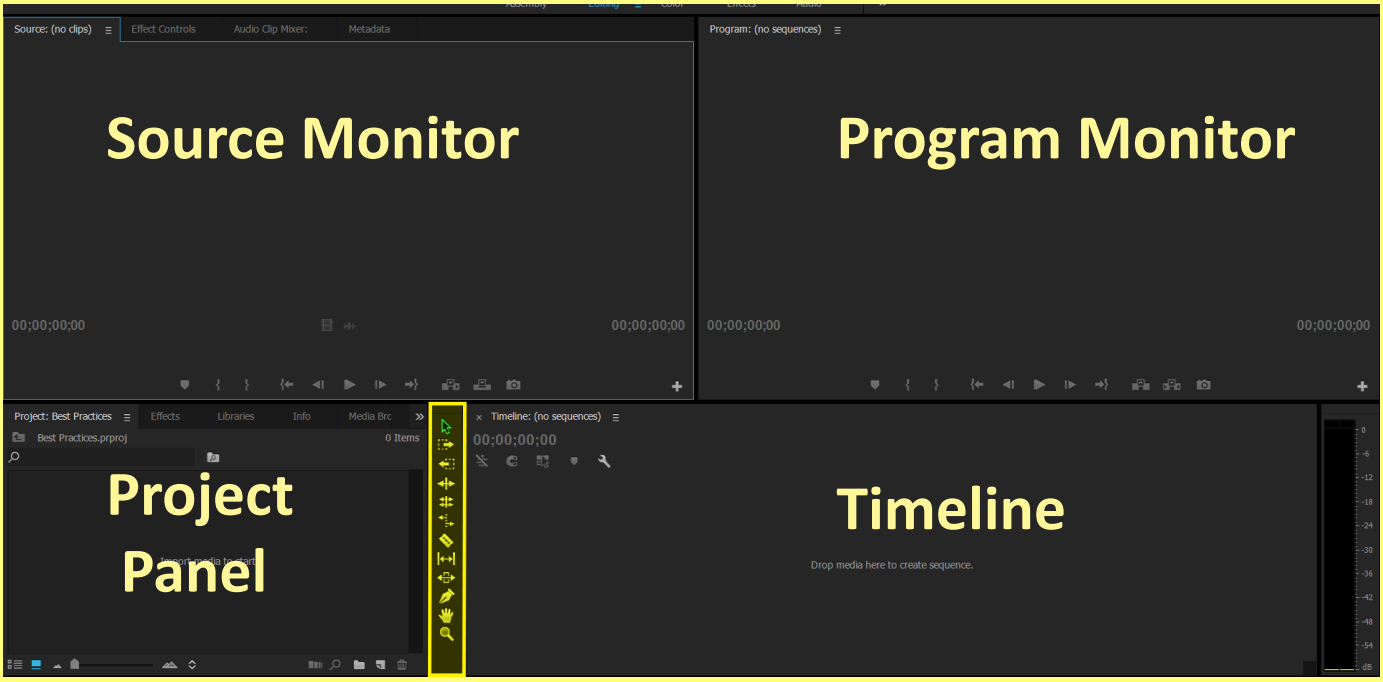
ALWAYS HIT "V" AFTER USING A TRIM TOOL

And if you do cut the hell out of your footage, just hit UNDO (CMD+Z) until all the unwanted cuts disappear. If you accidentally trim with any other tool, you'll have to watch the footage and re-trim to ensure it's correct.

V = Go back to the arrow
CMD+Z = UNDO - the single most useful keyboard command (ctrl+z on pc)

Trim Tool Recap

The default position for the trim tools is between the project panel and the timeline:



← Selection Tool - Go back to this after using any trim tool.

← Ripple Tool - Trims without leaving gaps.
(hold for Roll Tool - Moves a cut point.)

← Razor Tool - Cuts one clip into two.

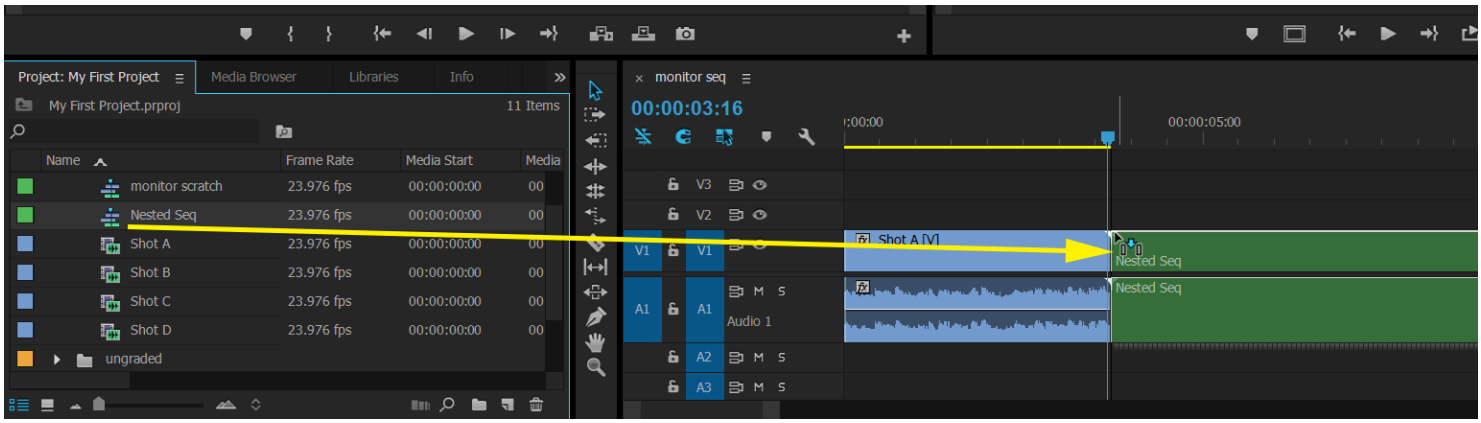
← Slip Tool - Slips a clip in place.
(hold for Slide Tool - Moves the whole clip.)

← Title Tool - Allows you to create text on your image.
More on this in chapter 7.

Nesting Sequences

You can put a sequence in another sequence in a process called **nesting**. Be aware that you will get the whole sequence - you won't be able to select part of it with in and out points.

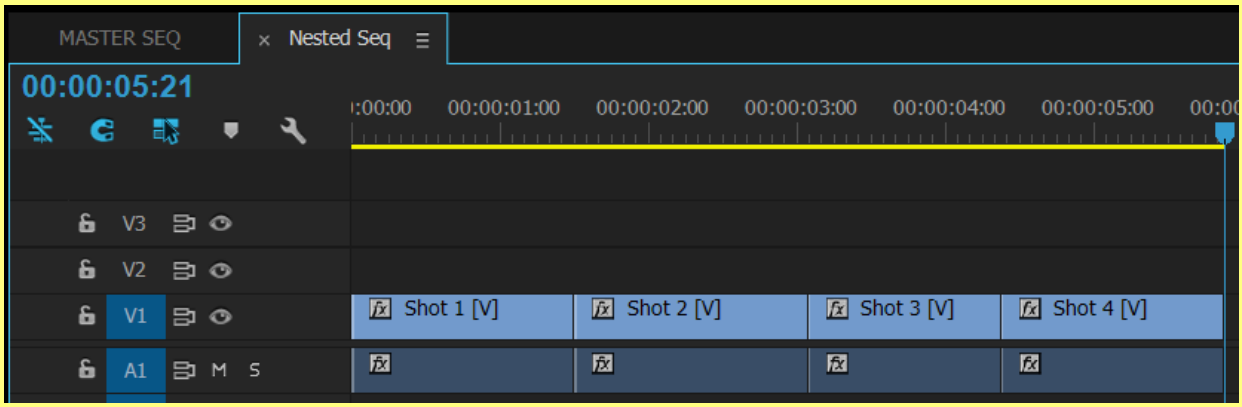
To nest a sequence: Drag the icon from the sequence to be nested into the timeline. Hold CMD (ctrl on pc) if you wish to make an insert edit.



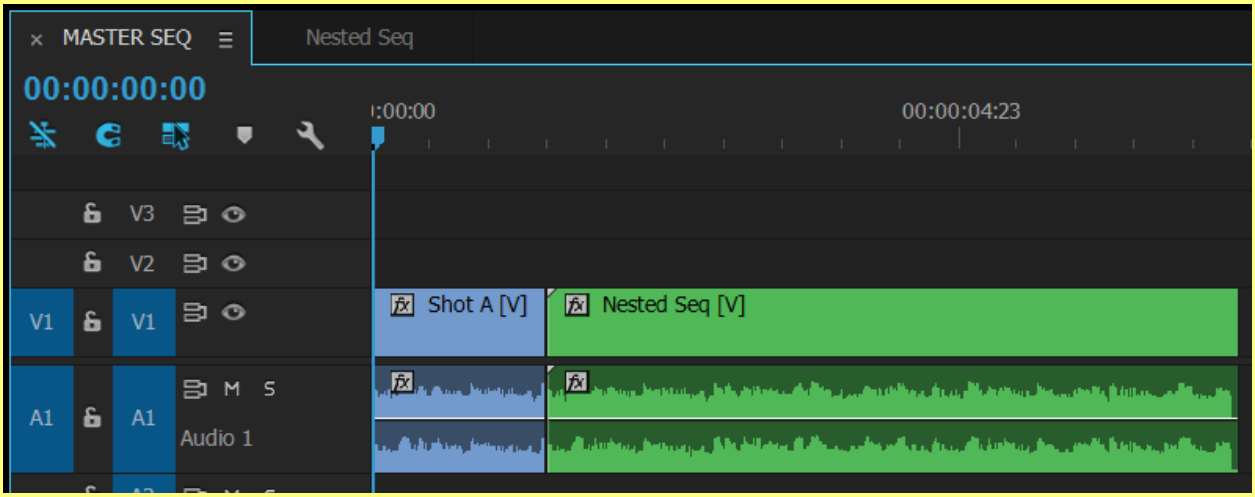
ROOKIE MISTAKE: Altering a Nested Sequence

If you make changes to a sequence you've already nested, those changes will occur in every instance where the nested sequence is used.

For example, here I've got a sequence named *Nested Seq* with four shots in it:

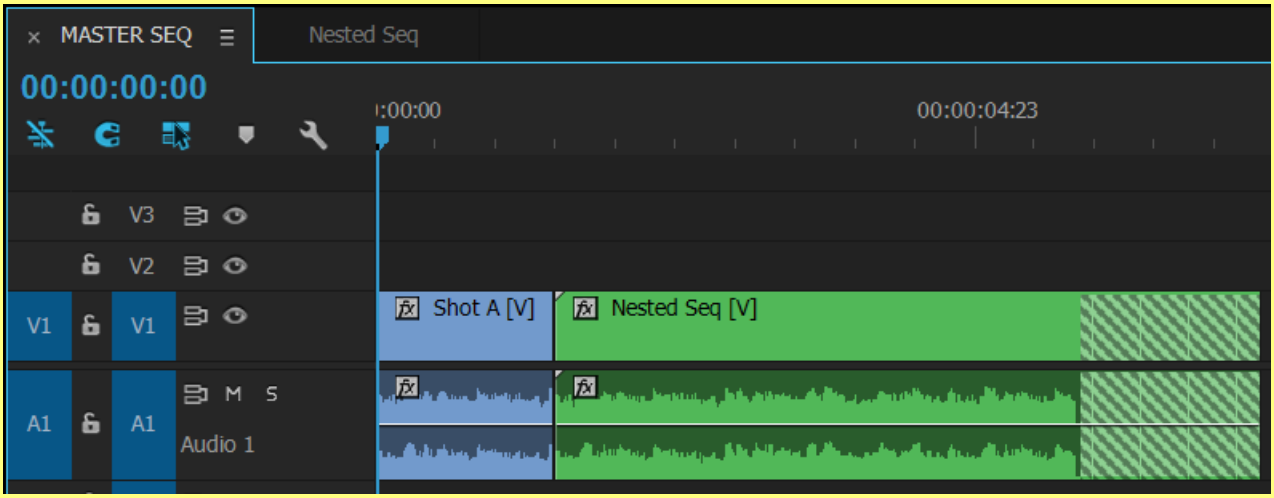


And I've nested it in a sequence named *Master Seq*:



Now if I go back and make changes to the nested sequence, those changes will be reflected in the master sequence.

So if I delete Shot 4 from the nested sequence, that footage will no longer appear in the master sequence. Premiere will not shorten the master sequence, but it will show hash marks where Shot 4 used to be:



There will be nothing but black video and silence when you play the hash marked area.

WHY BOTHER?

Nested sequences have a number of uses. I pretty much only use them for three:

Breaking up large projects - On longer works I'll make a new sequence for each scene and nest all those sequences onto a master sequence. This makes the project much more manageable.

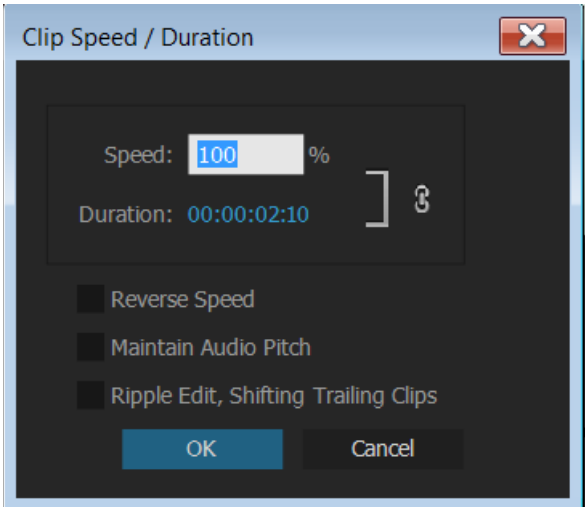
Transitioning composited clips - Compositing is combining multiple video elements into one shot. Because it involves stacking clips on multiple video tracks, it's difficult to transition into or out of a composite shot. A nested sequence only takes up one video track, and can handle transitions easily.
(We'll have a whole chapter dedicated to compositing later.)

Reusing groups of clips - If I have credit sequences, composited logo tags, commercial bumpers or anything else that will be used repeatedly throughout a project I'll make them in their own sequence and drag them in when needed.

The beauty of this last one becomes apparent when a client wants to change a reoccurring logo on a series of videos. If the logo is its own nested sequence, you only have to change it once and the effect is felt in every video that uses it.

Changing Speed

Footage can easily be sped up, slowed down or reversed.



To change the speed of a clip:
Right click on the clip in the timeline and select **Speed/Duration**. Enter new speed or duration and hit **OK**.

To reverse a clip:
Right click on the clip in the timeline and select **Speed/Duration**. Select **Reverse Speed** and hit **OK**.

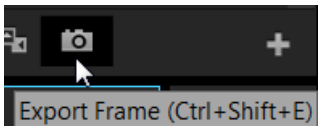
To create good looking slow motion:
Good slow motion is created by shooting your footage at a high frame rate and then playing it back at a lower one. The trick is to figure out the difference and play your footage back at that percentage. So if you shot your footage at 60 fps (frames per second) and your timeline is 24 fps, you would set your speed to 40%, because 24 ÷ 60 = .40. Bear in mind that one second of your 60 fps footage will be 2.5 seconds long when slowed down to 24 fps. Which brings us to our next common problem:

ROOKIE MISTAKE: Not Rippling Speed Changes

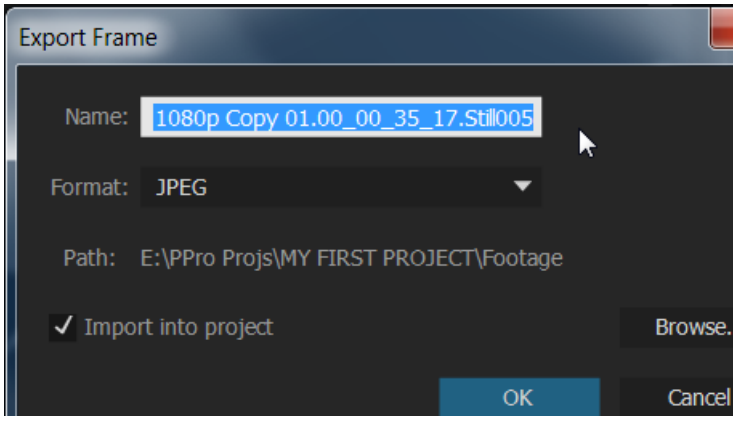
When you speed a clip up it becomes shorter. When you slow a clip down it becomes longer. If you don't ripple the speed change, you will have gaps after clips that have been sped up and clips that have been slowed down will get cut off where the next clip begins.

Get in the habit of selecting **Ripple Edit, Shift Trailing Clips** whenever changing speed.

Freeze Frames



To make a freeze frame:
1. Park the playhead on the frame you want to freeze.
2. Click the camera icon under the program monitor. The export frame dialogue will appear.
3. Make sure that the path is set to your footage folder for this project, and that **Import into project** is checked. Hit **OK**.
4. It will appear in your project panel with all your other footage.



Useful Keyboard Shortcuts

CMD+Z = UNDO - the single most useful key command (ctrl+z on pc)

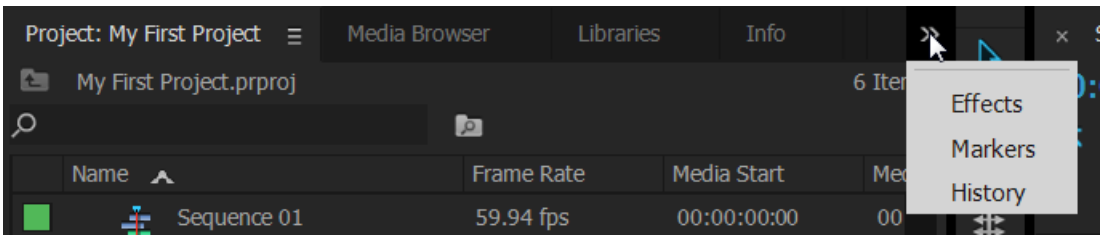
B = Ripple Tool
C = Cut (Razor Tool)

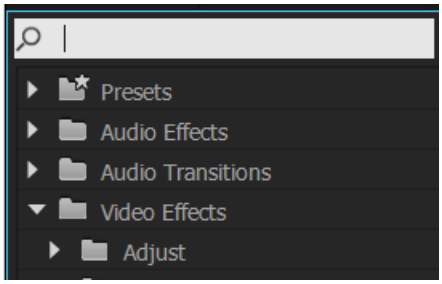
V = I'm done with a trim tool

For all other trim tools, just use the tool bar. There are more important keyboard shortcuts to memorize.

Applying Effects

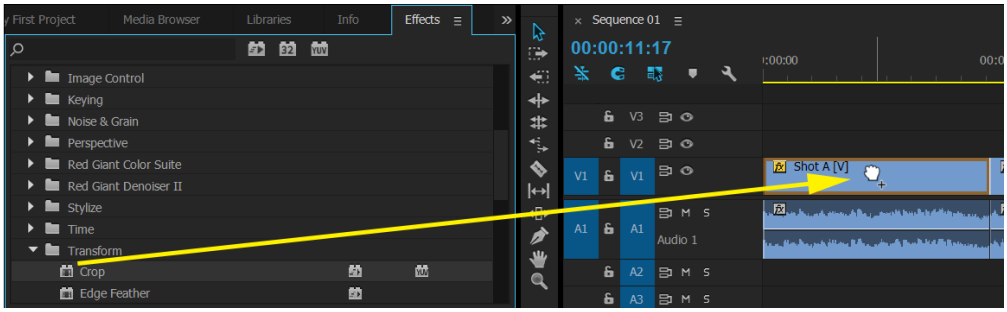
The **Effects Tab** is found in the **Project Panel**. If the effects tab is not visible, click on the arrow in the upper right corner of the project panel and select **Effects**.



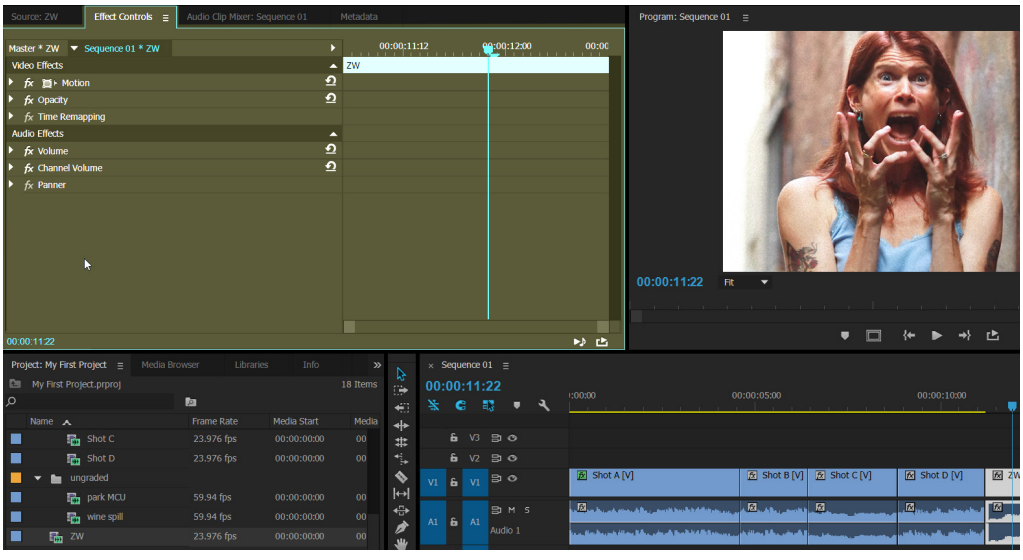


You can find an effect by digging through the video effects folders or by typing its name in the search bar.

To apply an effect:
Drag it to the clip on the timeline. Hopefully this looks familiar.

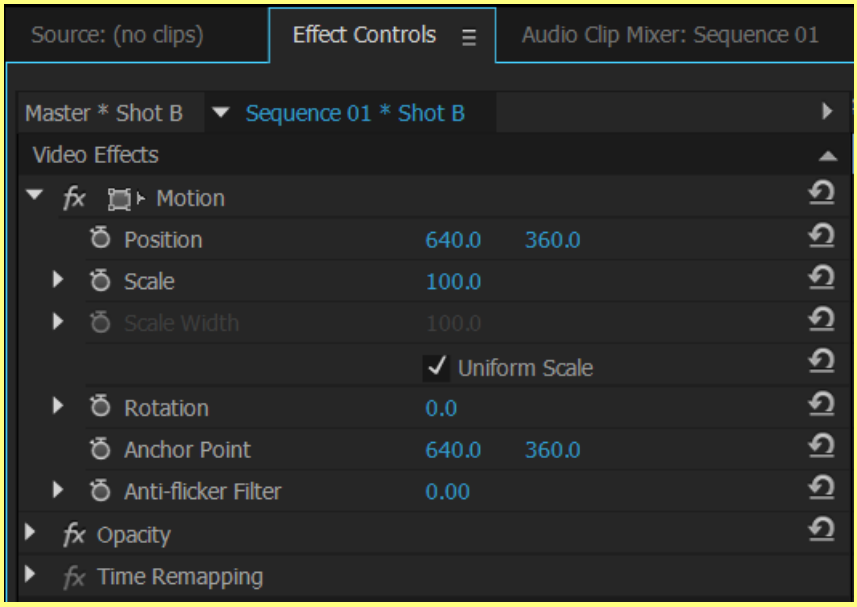


To modify an effect:
Select the clip in the time-line. Parameters for each effect can be adjusted in the **Effect Controls Tab** in the source monitor.



The Effect Controls Tab

There are a handful of controls that are universal to all effects.



- Opens a dropdown menu to reveal an effect's parameters.

- Turns an effect on or off. Useful for auditioning different effects.

- Allows you to physically drag or alter video in the program monitor when enabled. Not available for all effects.

- Reset button. Returns all effect parameters to their default setting.

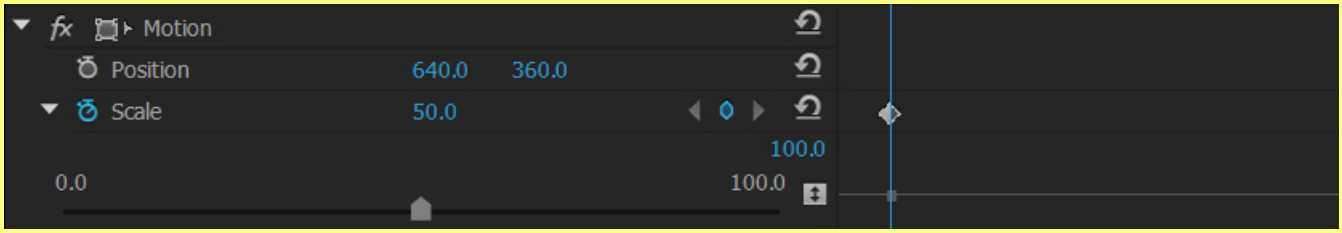
- Stopwatch. Toggles **keyframes** on and off. Turns blue when enabled.

Wait. What the hell are keyframes?

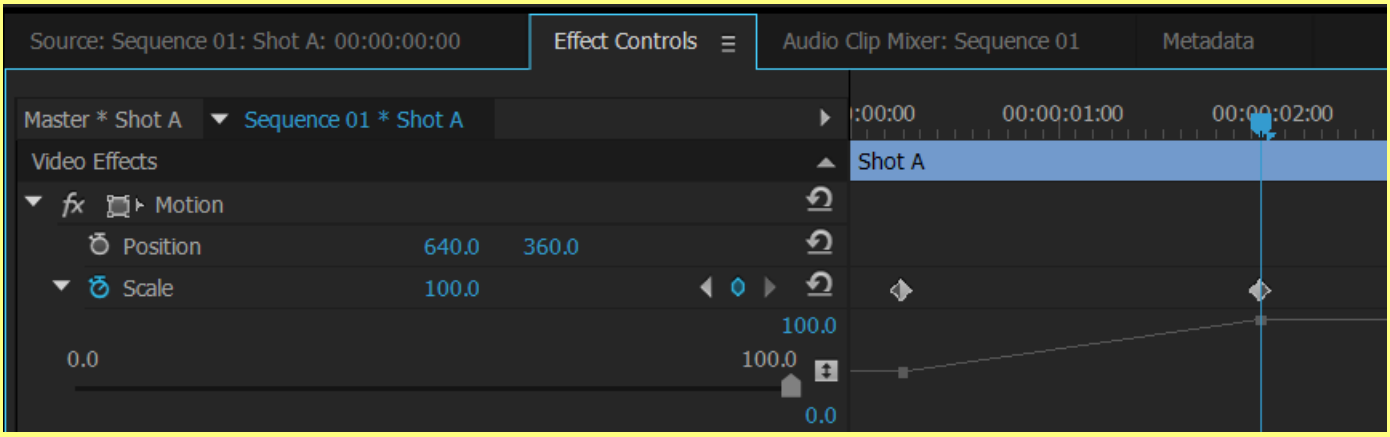
A keyframe ( ) marks a specific value on a specific frame. If we move to a new point on the timeline and create a new keyframe with a different value, Premiere will animate a gradual change between the two frames.

That didn't help at all. You suck at explaining this.

Okay, let's say I want a shot to start small and zoom in to fill the screen. I find the point on the timeline where I want the shot to begin growing and I turn on the stopwatch to enable keyframes. This creates a keyframe at the playhead. Then I set the **scale** value to 50%.



I then move to the point on the timeline where I want the shot to finish growing and I change the scale value to 100%. Premiere creates another keyframe at the new playhead position:



Premiere will then animate the scale of each frame between the two keyframes so that the shot appears to zoom in evenly until it fills the screen. This gradual change in values is called **interpolation**.

First keyframe: 50% scale.

Second keyframe: 100% scale.

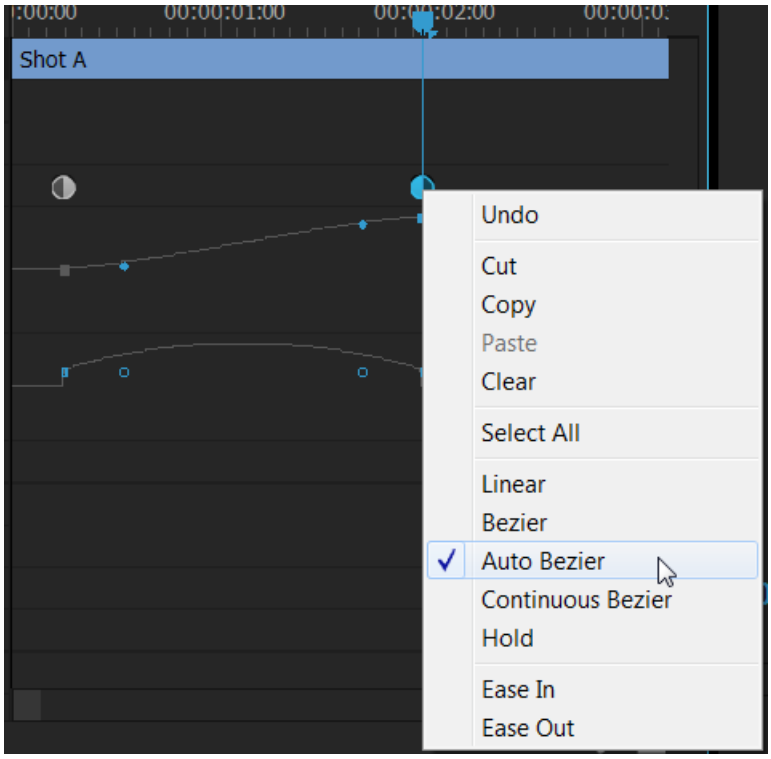
To speed up a keyframed change:
Move the keyframes closer together.

To slow down a change:
Move the keyframes farther apart.

The default keyframes can seem robotic with their abrupt starts and stops.

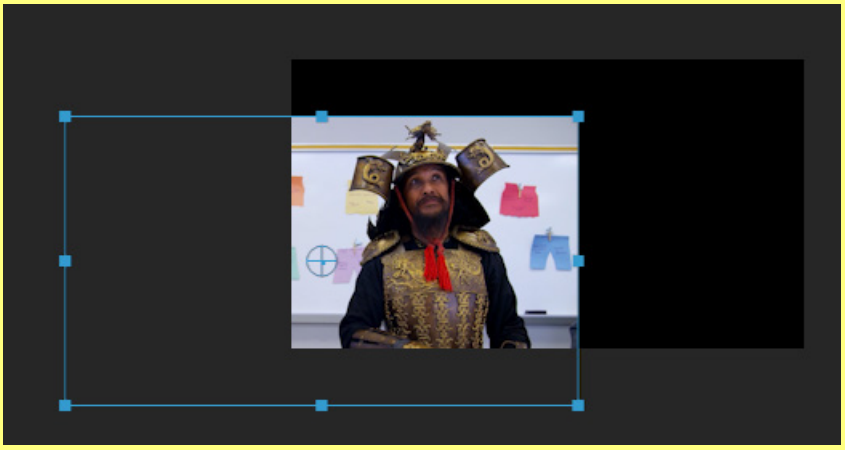
To smooth out a keyframed change:
Right click on the keyframe and select **Auto Bezier**.

This will make your move gradually accelerate out of the first keyframe and decelerate into the second one.

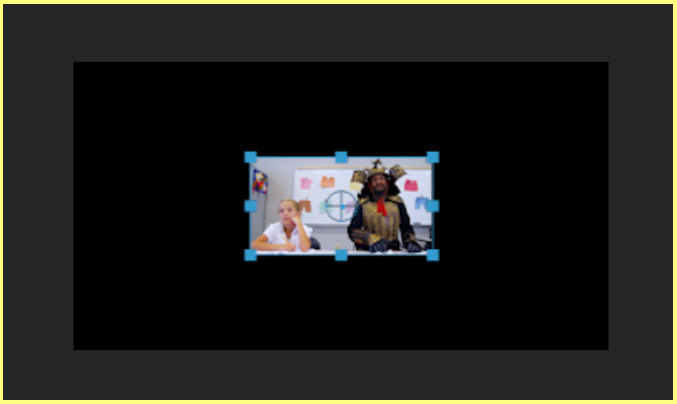


Fixed Effects

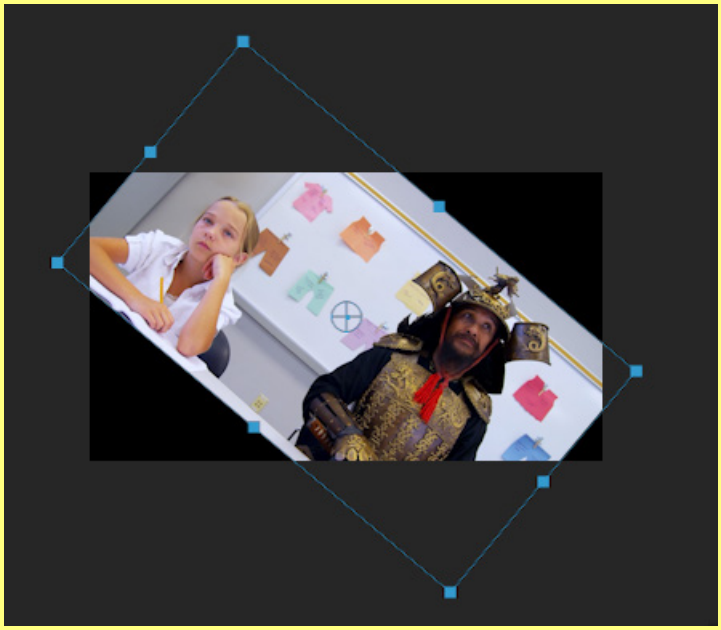
Some effects come pre-applied on every clip. These include motion effects (position, scale and rotation), opacity, time remapping and volume.



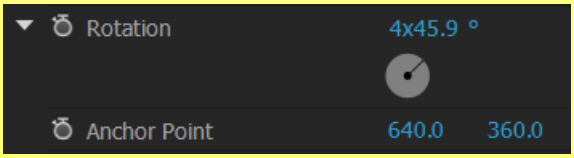
Position can be controlled via X and Y coordinates in the effect controls tab or you can click the little four-corner motion box ( ) and drag the frame around in the program monitor.



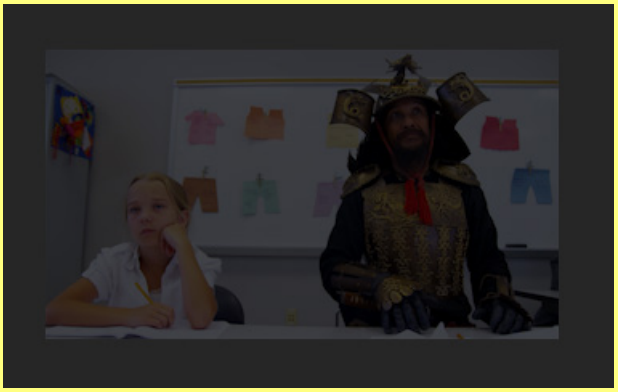
Scale can be controlled as a percentage in the effect controls tab or you can click the motion box and drag the blue squares at the edge of the frame.



Rotation can be controlled in the effect controls tab by spinning the little circle. You can spin it all the way around multiple times if you want it to keep spinning without having to set more than two keyframes. In the example below it's been spun around clockwise four complete times plus an additional 45.9˚.



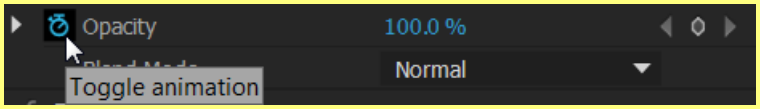
The **Anchor Point** is an X/Y coordinate that determines what part of the frame is the center of the rotation.



Opacity is controlled in the effect controls tab. Opacity allows us to see through a layer of video to the layer beneath it. If your clip is on V1 (video track one) and you lower the opacity, it will just get darker.

ROOKIE MISTAKE: Leaving Opacity Keyframes On

The default setting for opacity is to have the keyframes **on**, helping approximately no one. If you try an opacity level and then change your mind and set opacity to a different level, you will create a creepy clip whose opacity fluctuates (unless you never moved the play-head.)



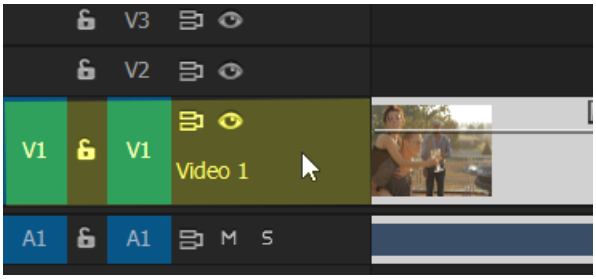
Get in the habit of turning keyframes off when changing opacity.
You can always turn them back on later.

Time Ramping

Time ramping is kind of a pain in the butt but it looks really cool. It's when footage speeds up or slows down smoothly. See every commercial and movie trailer out there for examples of this.

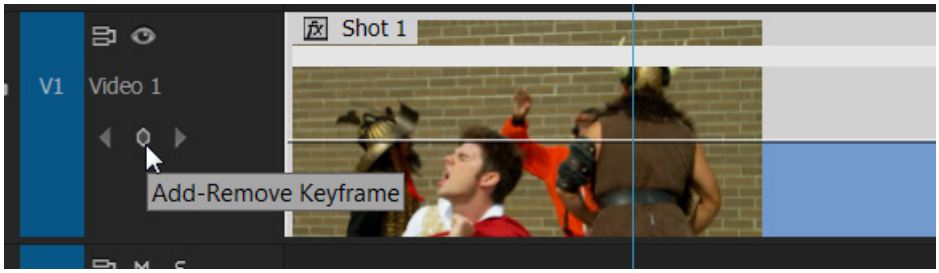
To remap time:

1. Expand your track by putting the cursor in the highlighted area and scrolling up. Make that sucker nice and big so you have some working room.

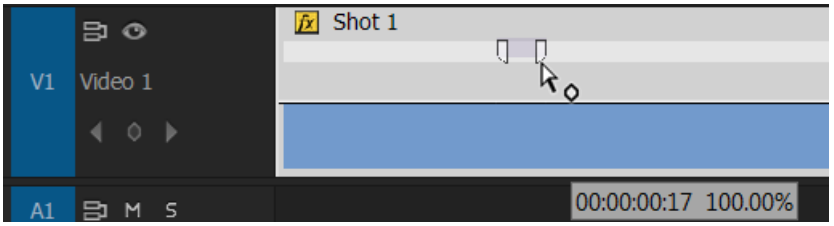


2. Right click on the clip in the timeline and select **Show Clip Keyframes > Time Remapping > Speed**

3. Find the point where you want your speed to ramp up or down and click the **Add Keyframe** button.



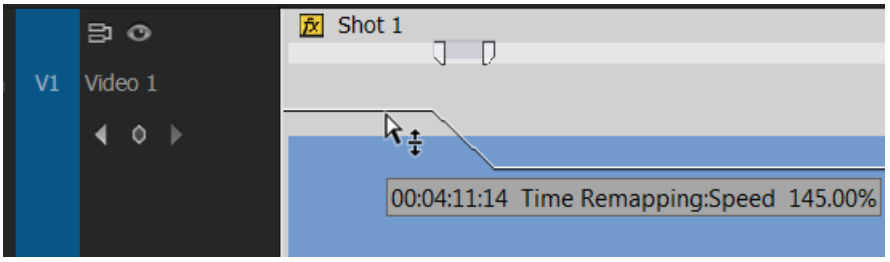
4. Your keyframe will have this shape: 



5. Grab one half and drag them apart, roughly the length you want your ramp to be.

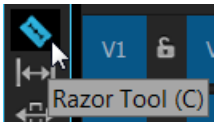
I have turned off thumbnails to make everything easier to see.

6. Drag the speed line up or down to change speed. Anything dragged up into the gray area will be faster than 100%, anything dragged down into the blue will be slower.



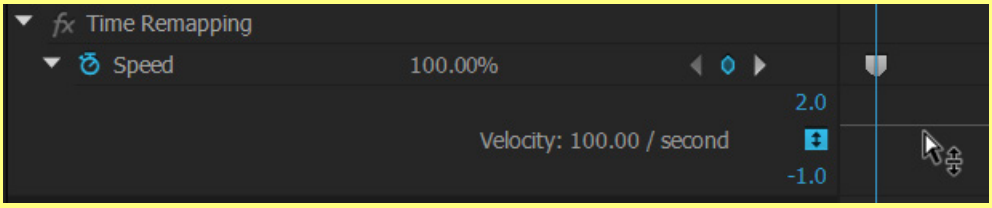
Quick & Dirty Time Ramp

1. Find the spot on the timeline where you want time to shift and cut it with the **Razor Tool**.



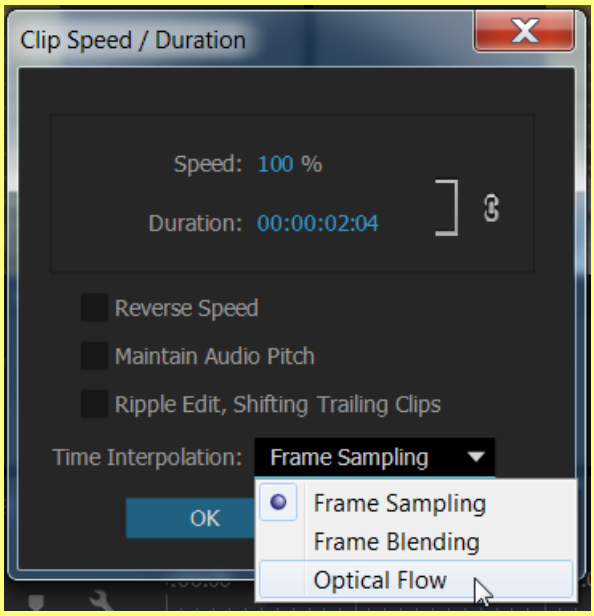
2. Right click on the half you wish to change and select **Speed/Duration**. Change the speed to the desired setting and hit **OK**.

ROOKIE MISTAKE: Remapping Time in the Effect Controls Tab



Don't.

Optical Flow



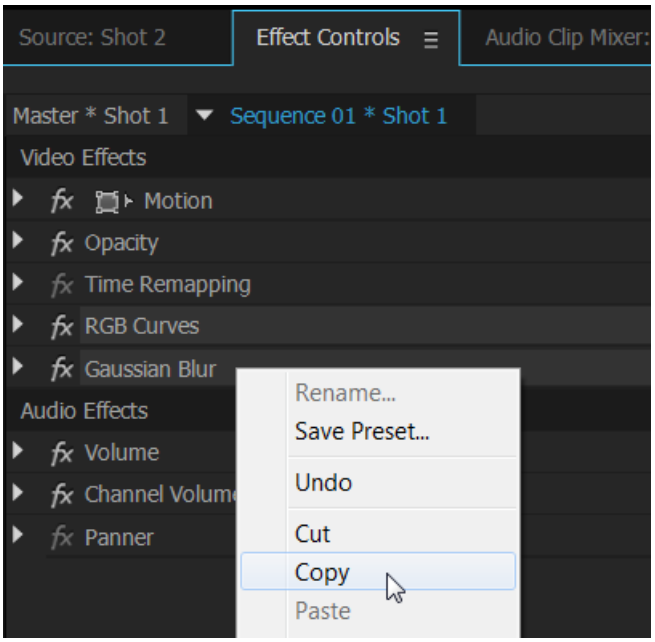
Since I started writing this chapter, Adobe has released an update containing the highly anticipated **optical flow** time interpolation feature. It allows you to make slow motion by creating new frames in between the ones you shot. This means slow motion even if you didn't shoot at a high frame rate or super slow motion if you did.

I've played with it a little, and mostly I've made horrifying smeary images that look like a Tool video.

The trick seems to be having a plain background. The smeary nightmare look seems to happen when an object in motion crosses in front of another object.

It definitely seems to have potential. Play with it. Your level of expertise is only 30 minutes behind mine.

Copying Effects



Effects can be copied and pasted into other clips to save you the hassle of inputting all their parameters again.

To reuse effect settings:

1. Right click on the effect in the effect controls tab and select **Copy**. To copy multiple effects, hold **CMD** (ctrl on pc) and select each effect with a left click, then right click and choose **Copy**.

2. Select the target clip in the timeline, right click in the effect controls tab and choose **Paste**.

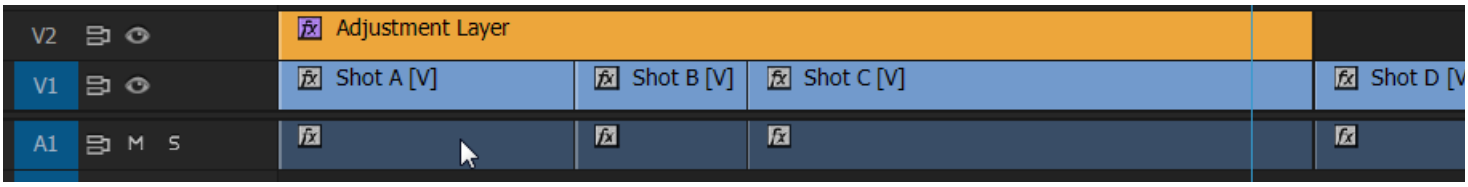
-OR-

2. Instead of copying the effects, choose **Save Preset**.

Preset effects live forever in the **Presets Folder** of the effects tab. They are a super-handy time saver once you start figuring out what workflow habits and go-to effects work best for you.

Adjustment Layers

Adjustment layers allow you to place effects over multiple clips in the timeline. Any effect placed in an adjustment layer affects every clip below it. EVERY CLIP. When we get to compositing we're going to be using multiple layers of video; where we place an adjustment layer becomes important.



To apply an effect to multiple clips:

1. Click anywhere in the project panel to ensure that it is selected (it should have a thin blue outline).

2. At the top menu choose **File > New > Adjustment Layer**. It will appear in the project panel just like any other clip.

3. Drag the layer to **V2** on the timeline, or whichever empty video track is over your clips. Trim it to cover the desired area.

4. Add effects to the adjustment layer and modify in the effect controls tab. They will have the same effect on every clip beneath the layer.

Masking and Tracking Effects

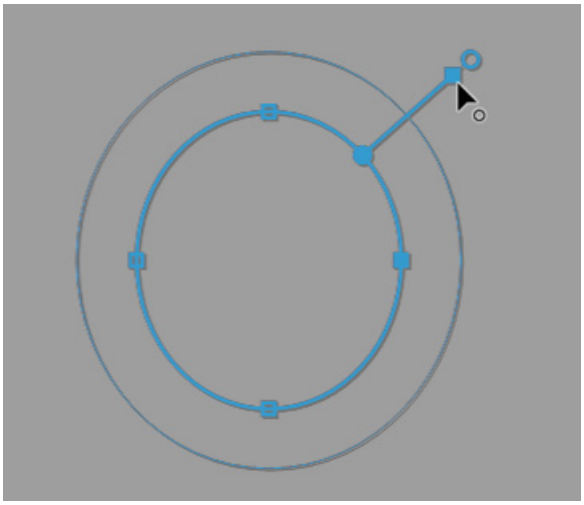
Holy crap you kids have no idea how easy you've got it. A **mask** allows you to define part of a frame and apply an effect to just that part. **Tracking** is when the mask moves to follow the subject. Previous versions of Premiere Pro did not have this feature - we had to send each clip to After Effects or build a track matte out of a title card and track it manually using keyframes. It was awful.

To create an effect mask:

1. In an effect's controls, click one of the following shapes:

The ellipse and rectangle will create an elliptical or rectangular mask respectively, the pen will let you draw a free form mask.

2. The chosen shape will appear in the Program monitor. You can reshape it by dragging the dots on the shape; you can feather it by dragging the little handle.
(The solid dot resizes the mask, the hollow one feathers it.)



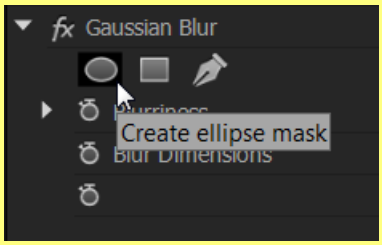
3. Tick the **Inverted** box if you want the effect to take place outside the mask.

Masking Example: Blurring a Face

Let's say we have footage of a burglar slipping out a window carrying a sack with a large dollar sign. Since he refused to sign a talent release and has not yet been convicted of any crime, we need to blur his face out:

1. Drag the Gaussian Blur effect to the clip on the timeline.

2. In effect controls, click the **Create Elliptical Mask** button.

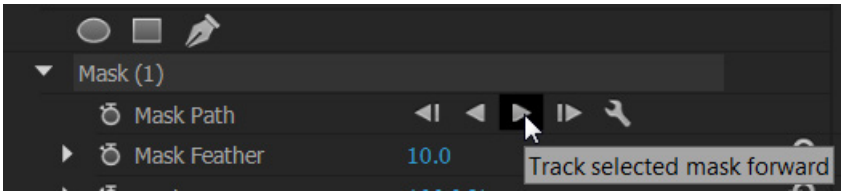


3. Reshape the mask to his face using the dots on the mask.

4. In the effect's controls, set the blurriness to a level that conceals his identity but still retains some detail. The blurriness in the picture is set to 40.

Next we'll track the mask. Premiere will go frame by frame and automatically follow his head with the mask.

To track a mask:
Click the **Track selected mask forward** button. This will keyframe the mask's path from the playhead to the end of the clip.



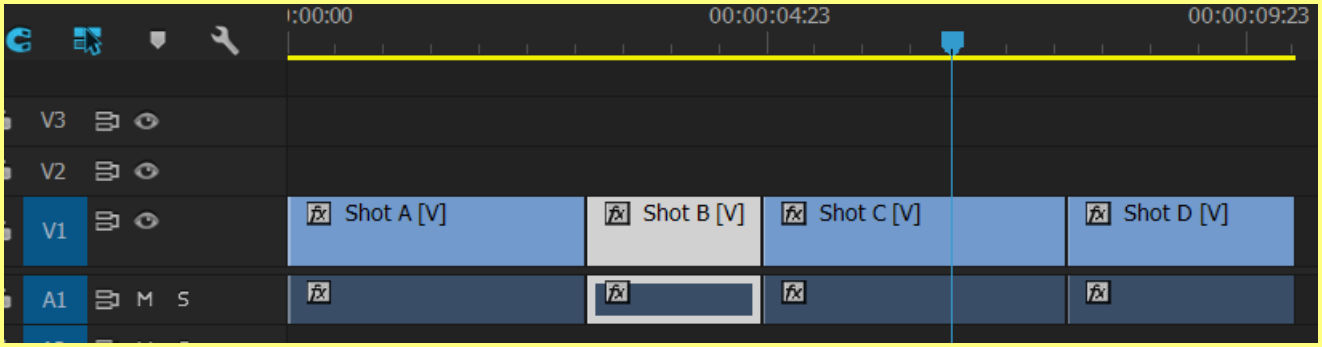
Tracking backwards will keyframe its path from the playhead to the beginning of the clip.

If the mask gets off track, which happens frequently if the subject moves behind an object, go in and manually move the mask and then begin automatic tracking again from that point.

ROOKIE MISTAKE: Adjusting effects for the wrong clip

When you adjust effects you can see the results in the program monitor, but **only if the playhead is parked over the highlighted clip**. The effect controls tab always shows readings for whichever clip is highlighted; the program monitor always shows the frame the playhead is parked on.

For example, in the timeline below the effect controls tab would show the effects from Shot B, but the program monitor would show Shot C.



If you're not seeing the results of your change, make sure you're working on the right clip.

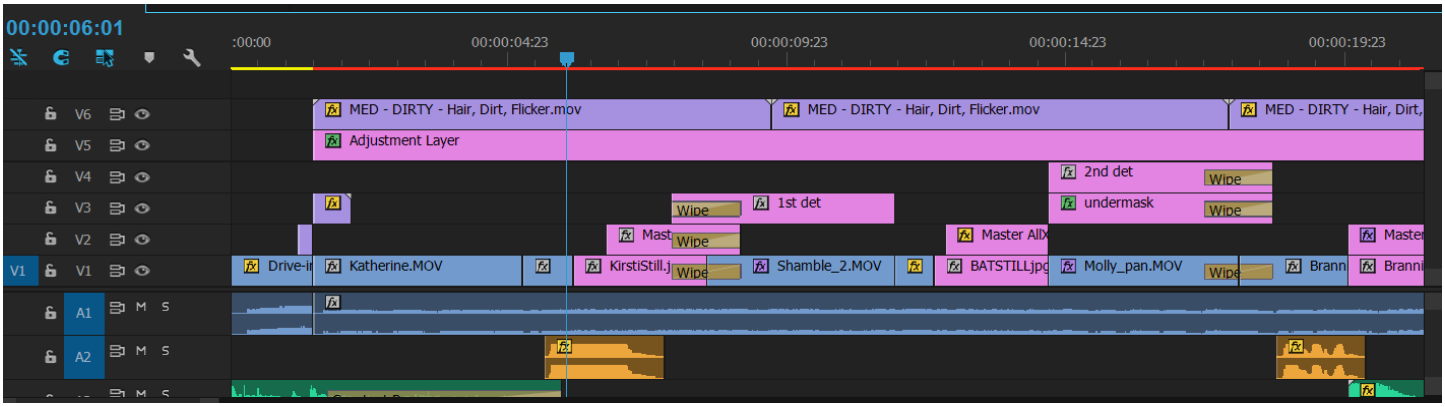
Rendering

When you edit footage in Premiere, you aren't actually changing any of your original footage. Premiere references those files and plays them back with any effects in real time. The more effects and layers you add, the harder your computer has to work. Premiere puts a colored line at the top of the timeline to let you know how likely your footage will play back smoothly.

No line = footage will play back smoothly.
Yellow line = footage will probably play back smoothly.
Red line = footage will probably not play back smoothly.

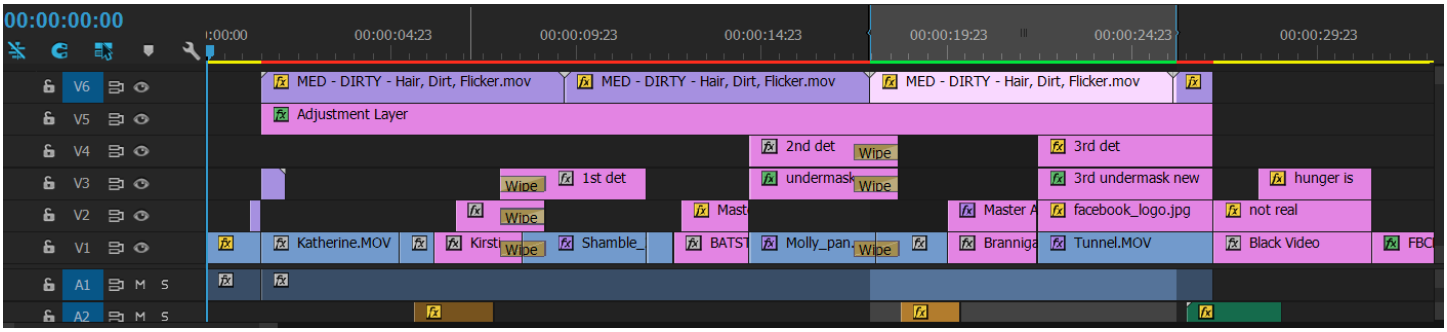
Rendering is when Premiere writes a whole new video file (called a **preview file**) with all your effects and layers added together that will play smoothly.

Green line = you have rendered a preview file that will play back smoothly.



To render your whole timeline:
Hit **ENTER**.
Depending on how complicated your project is, this might take a while. You might want to go make a sandwich or cup of coffee or something.

To render part of your timeline:
1. Define the section you want to render by setting in and out points (with the **i** and **o** keys).
2. Hit **ENTER**.



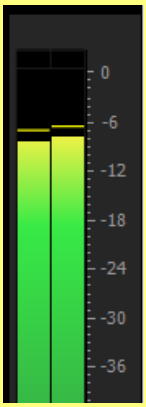
6. AUDIO

Audio is half of the audience's experience, yet many beginning filmmakers treat it as an afterthought. Let's fix that by establishing some ground rules.

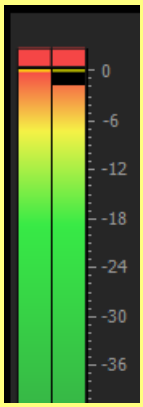
RULE #1:
Audio levels must NEVER exceed 0 dB.

At the bottom right corner are the **VU meters**. These measure your project's volume in decibels (dB). If the volume goes over 0 dB, the audio will distort and it will sound like it's being played through a kazoo.

You must control the volume of each clip to ensure this doesn't happen.



Here the volume is peaking around -6 dB. The VU meters leave little high water marks to show you where the volume was loudest. These disappear after a few seconds, so they only show very recent audio peaks.



Here the volume has gone above 0 dB and the VU meters are angry. Little red boxes light up to warn you that audio levels are too high. These will not disappear until the next time you press play.

So what is the correct volume setting?

There isn't one. Sorry. Different sound editors prefer different levels. I usually set my dialogue peaks at -6 dB for the web, -12 dB for festivals, and -20 dB for broadcast.

The important thing is to be consistent. Set dialogue levels first and then set music and effects to compatible levels. Thanks to the new **Auto-Match** feature, this is fairly simple.

There are many ways to control volume. We're going to keep it simple, by using auto-match for dialogue and setting all other levels in the timeline.

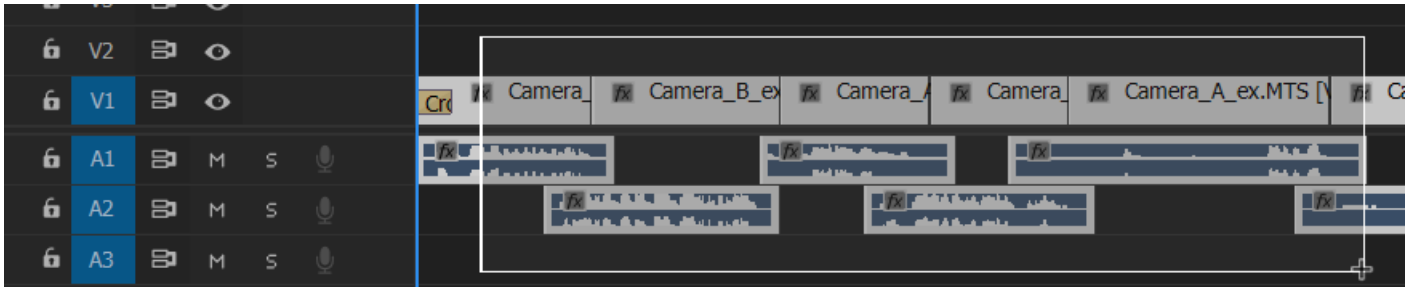
Auto-Match

Auto-match can be found in the new **Essential Sound Panel**. Auto-match will set your dialogue to average (not peak) at -23 dB*, which is good for broadcast. Auto-match is also available for music, SFX and ambient sound, but it's not as useful.

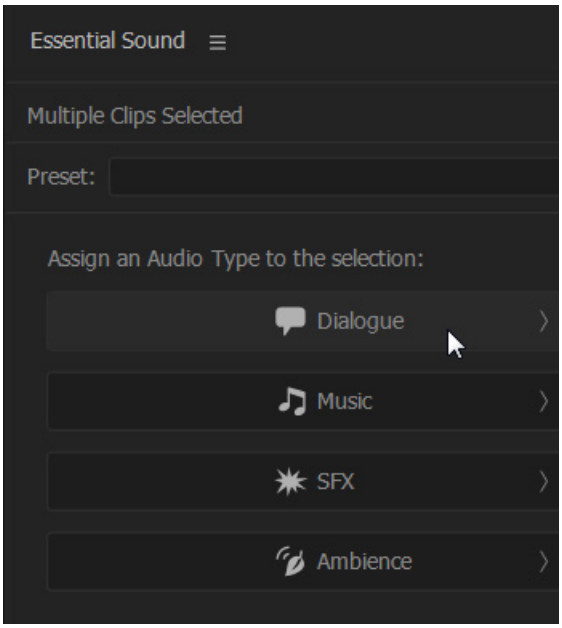
To auto-match your dialogue:

1. Open the Essential Sound Panel by clicking **Window > Essential Sound.**

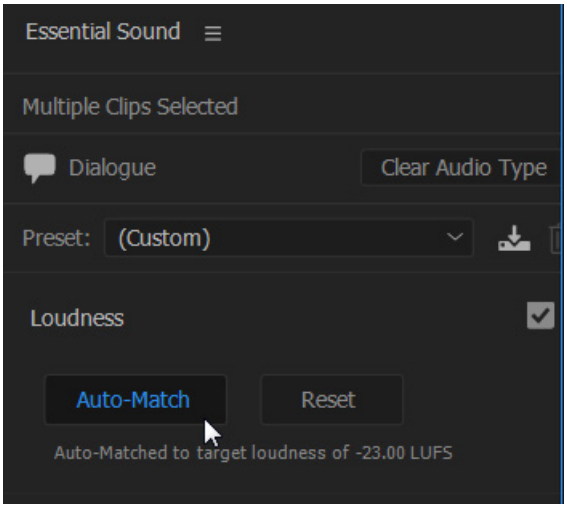
2. Use the selection tool ( ) to highlight all of your dialogue clips.



3. In the Essential Sound panel, select **Dialogue**. This will open up the most common effects used on dialogue clips.



4. Under Loudness, click the Auto-Match button. All of your dialogue clips will be averaged to -23 dB.*

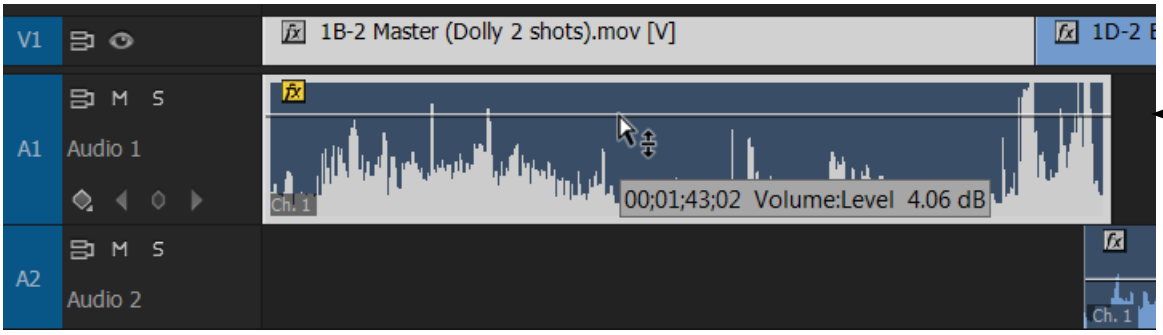


*Auto-match actually sets levels to -23 LUFS, not -23 dB. For our purposes they are the same thing. Ask me in class if you want a boring explanation of the difference between the two.

To adjust volume in the timeline:

1. Expand your audio tracks to give yourself some working room.

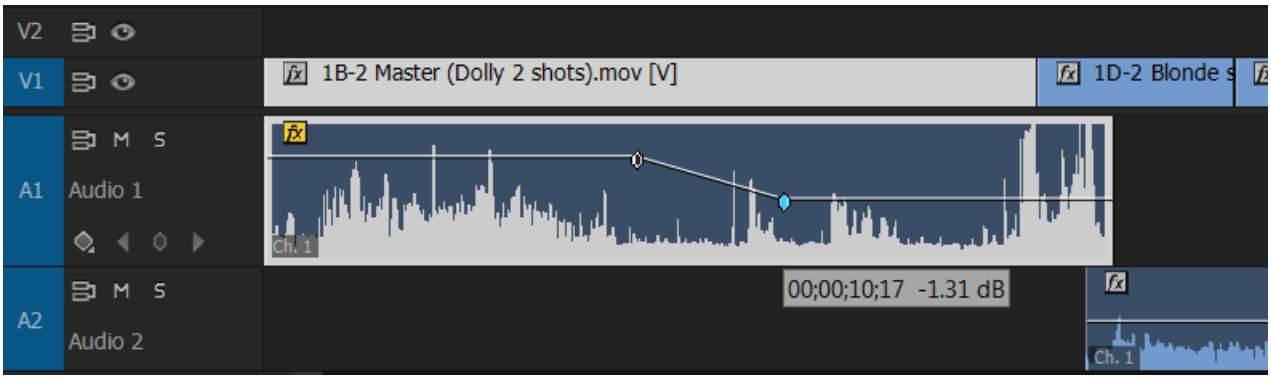
2. Raise or lower the volume line to a pleasing level.



The volume line. Like the opacity line, but useful.

3. CMD + click on the volume line to set a keyframe. (ctrl + click on pc)

4. Drag keyframes up or down to fine tune your volume.

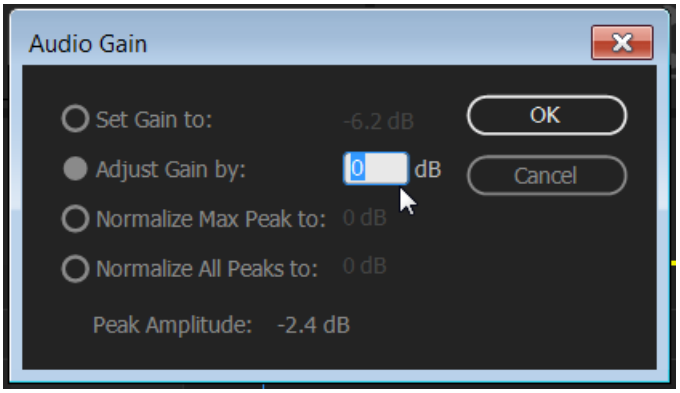


The volume line will only let you add a maximum of +6 dB. This isn't always enough.

To add more volume:

1. Select a clip or group of clips. Right click and choose **Audio Gain...**

2. Adjust the gain accordingly.

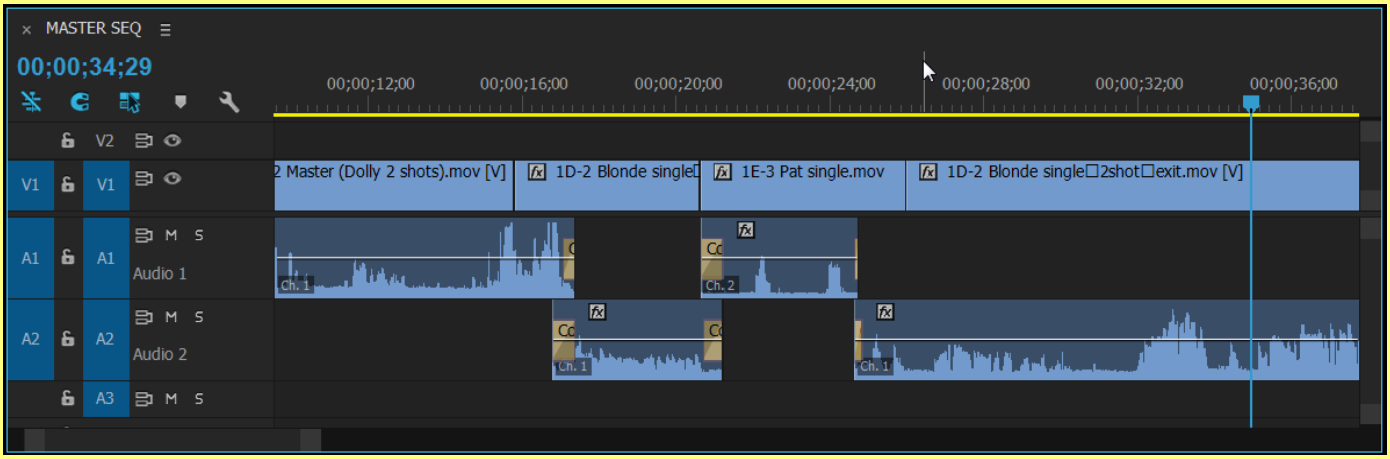


The easiest method is to mix your entire project with the dialogue auto-matched to -23 dB. Adjust your SFX, ambience and music to pleasing levels.

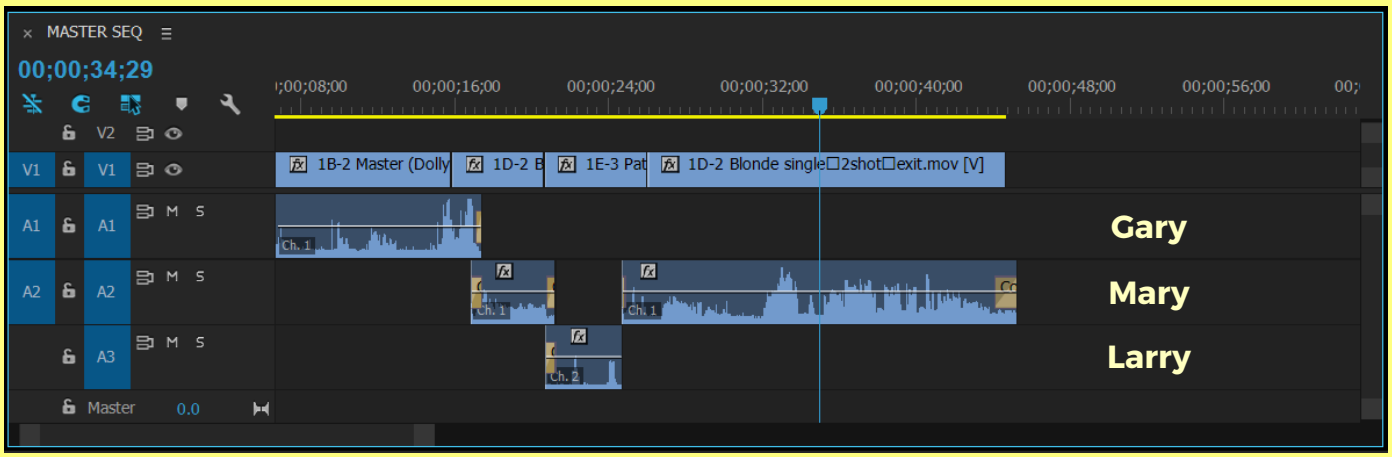
Then select your entire project and adjust the gain for the whole thing at once.

RULE #2:
Checkerboard your dialogue clips.

Get into this habit now. Don't butt your audio clips into one another. As the editor, you control the pacing of the performances, but you need to give yourself room to work.

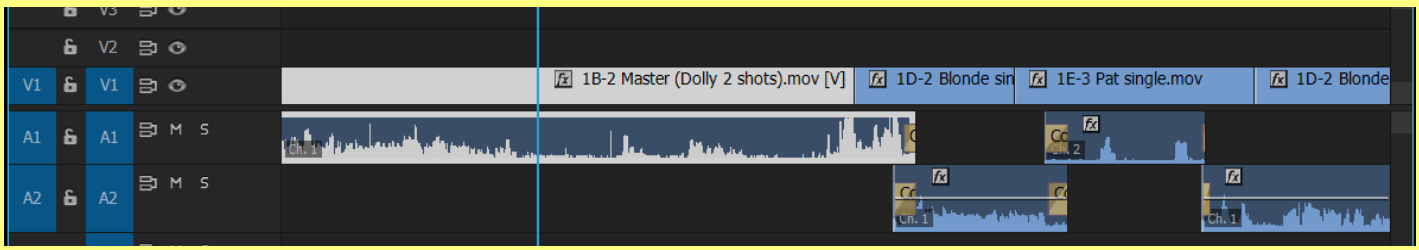


Some editors assign one dialogue track for each character. I usually don't, but this is a perfectly acceptable way to work:



RULE #3:
Use L-cuts.

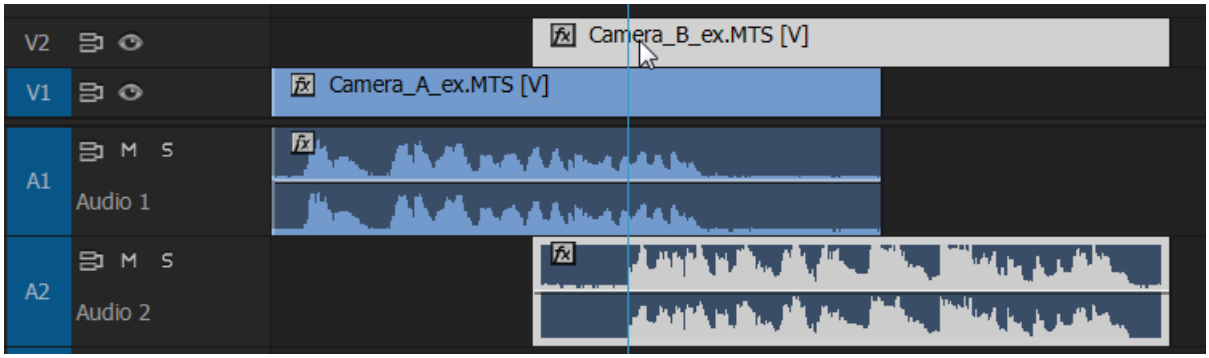
An L-cut is where the audio and video cut on different frames. See the L shape in the highlighted clip below?



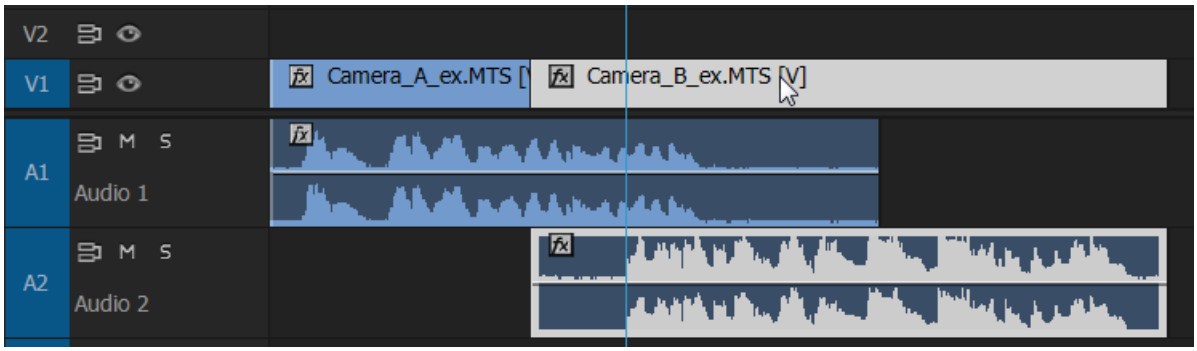
L-cuts make your cuts less obvious to the audience. Good editing is seamless, invisible editing.

To make an L-cut:
There are many ways to make an L-cut. Remember that holding OPT (alt on pc) will allow you to trim just the audio or video portion of a clip. Here's how I usually work:

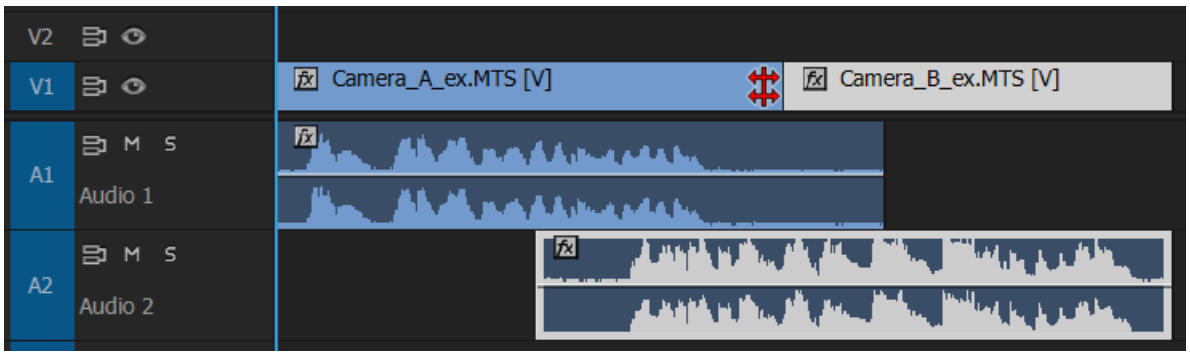
1. Drag your second clip to V2. Don't worry about what it looks like, just listen. In this example, I want the second character to interrupt the first. Note how the waveforms overlap:



2. Drag the V2 clip down onto V1.



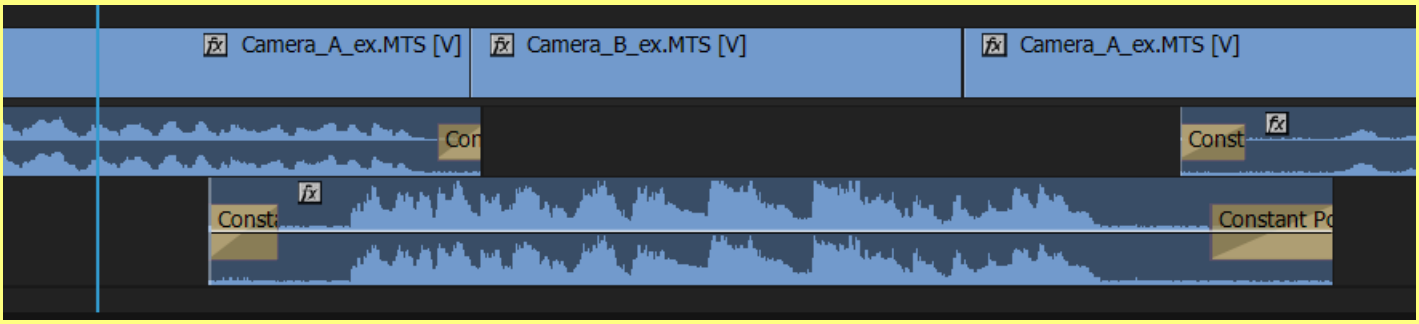
3. **OPT** + **Roll** the video cut point.
Hold **OPT** (alt on pc) and use the **roll tool** to move the video cut point.



There are editors who absolutely insist on differentiating between L-cuts and J-cuts, based on whether your new clip makes an L or J shape. These people have misplaced priorities and you don't need their negative energy in your life. You are an artist.

RULE #4:
Use handles and crossfades.

Handles are dead air on either side of an actor's dialogue. Leaving handles on the audio clips will give you a place to put crossfades that don't step on any dialogue. The crossfades aren't always necessary, but they're good insurance against pops and a good habit to start.



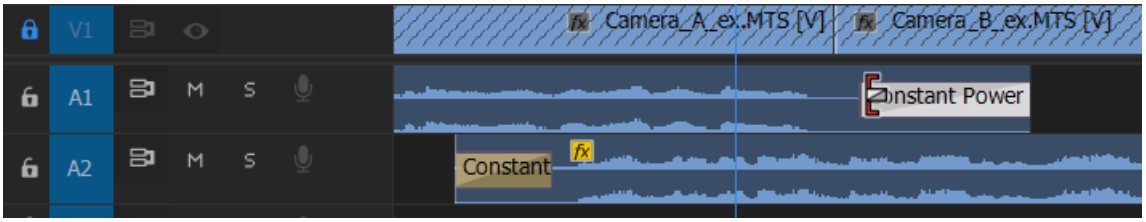
To add a bunch of fades quickly:

1. Lock the video track.

2. Right click on one end of an audio clip and select **Apply Default Transition**

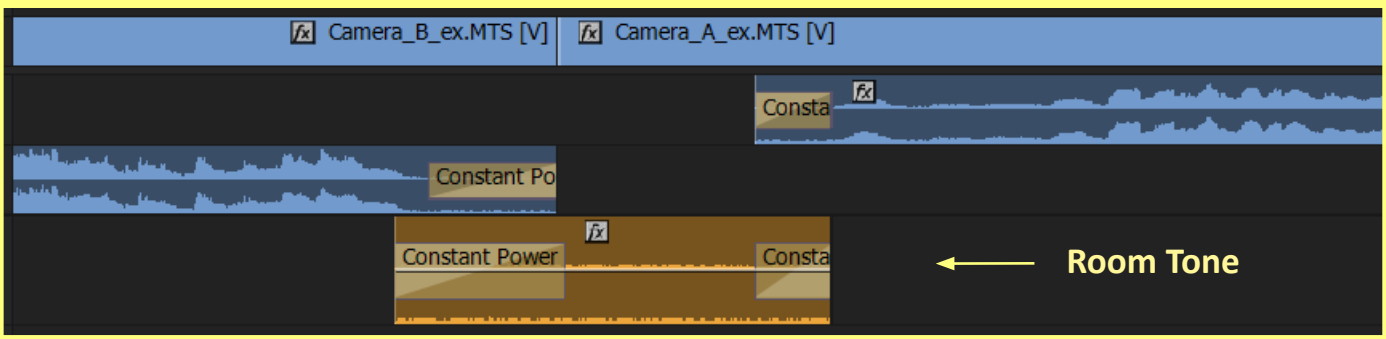
3. Trim the fade so it does not cut into the dialogue.

4. Repeat for both ends of every single clip.



RULE #5:
No gaps or dips

Make sure your crossfades cover each other. Don't fade out without something else coming in or already in. Fill gaps with **room tone** (ambient sound from location).

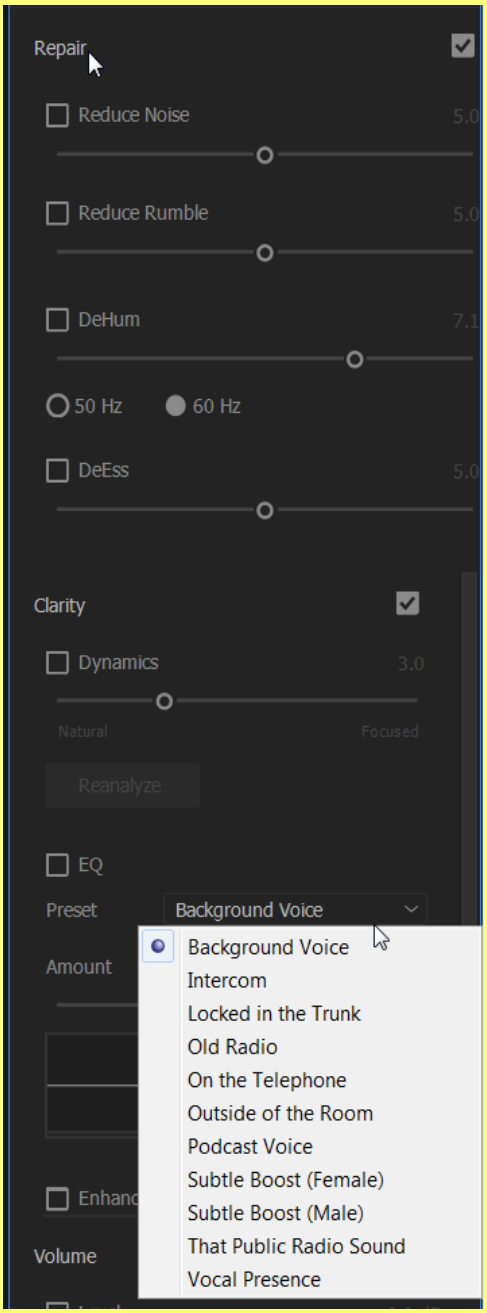


Essential Sound Panel

Premiere has plenty of audio effects that are dragged to the timeline like video effects, but the most common ones are all found in the **Essential Sound Panel**. All of these effects can be adjusted in the Effect Controls panel.

In order to access these effects, you must first designate your clip as Dialogue, Music, SFX or Ambience. Let's take a look at what's available:

Dialogue:



Loudness - Loudness gives us the very useful **Auto-Match** feature.

Repair -

Reduce Noise - Reduce Noise is great for removing background noise when used at a low setting. If you turn it up to a more aggressive setting, it will sound over-processed and muddy. It will take a second to kick in as it analyzes your audio, but this moment of adjustment will not be in your final product.

Reduce Rumble - does what it says.

DeHum - This is specific to hum caused by lighting or electrical cables.

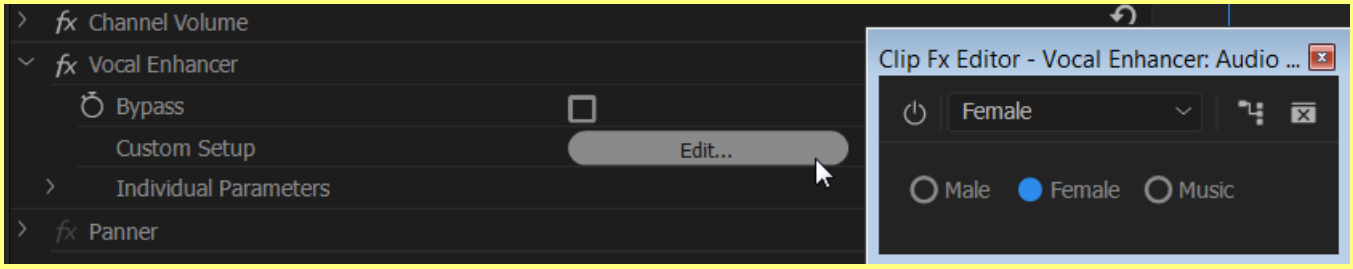
DeEss - This is for removing sibilance from harsh consonants like S, T and Z.

Clarity -

Dynamics - Do not use this. The slider goes from "Natural" to "Focused" but it should read "No Effect" to "Super Shitty."

EQ - I will go into more detail about parametric equalizers later, but some of these presets are great.

Enhance - This is good for voice over. Be sure to go into the Effect Controls panel, click **Edit...** and select the gender of your announcer.

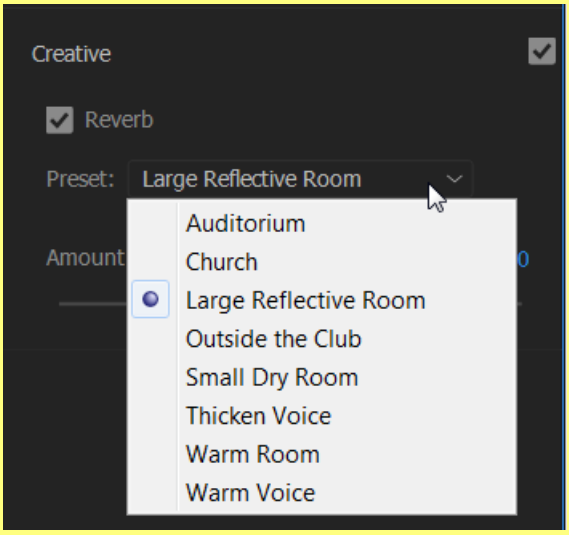


Dialogue, continued:

Creative -

Reverb - This adds a slight echo to imitate the reverberation caused by different sized rooms. This is useful for adding presence to ADR or to make close ups match wider shots.

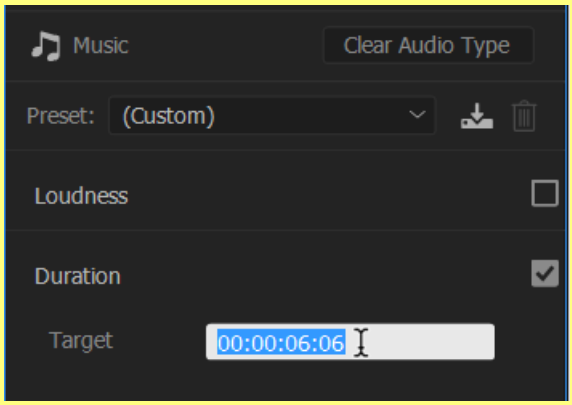
Choose the correct room size and raise the amount from 0.0 until it sounds natural.



Music:

Loudness - Don't use Auto-Match for music.

Duration - This is great if you don't push it too far. Duration allows you to make your music fit the length of your sequence. This is really useful for commercials and short corporate videos.



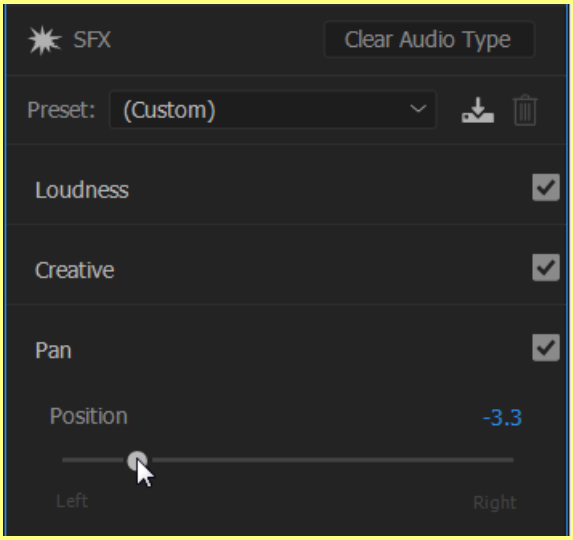
SFX:

Loudness - Don't use Auto-Match for sound FX.

Creative -

Reverb - The presets are a little different, but it works just like the reverb described above.

Pan - Allows you to make a sound effect seem to come from a specific location. If you want a sound to move, you can keyframe the panner in the Effect Controls tab.

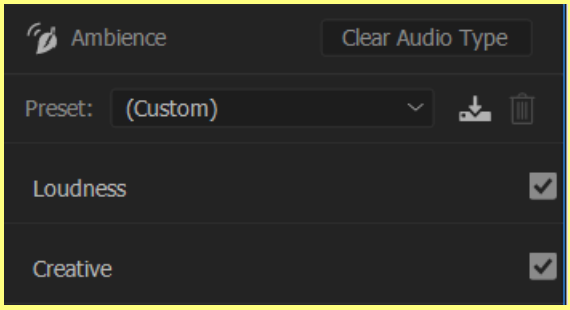


Ambience:

Loudness - Don't use Auto-Match for ambience.

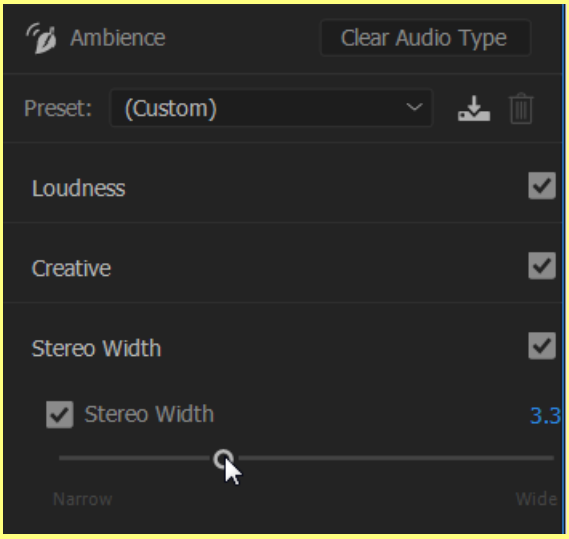
Creative -

Reverb - The presets are a little different, but it works just like the reverb described above.



Ambience, continued:

Stereo Width - This is great for making crowd walla seem to fit the size of the room. I'm not exactly sure how it works; it's possible some sort of voodoo is involved.

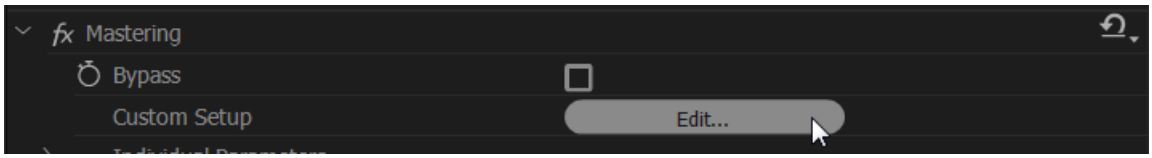


Other Audio Effects

Most of the audio effects you will need can be found in the Essential Sound panel. The rest are in the effects tab and can be dragged to the timeline and adjusted in the effect controls tab exactly like video effects. Here are a few you may find useful.

To enable the graphic interface for most audio effects:

Select the **Edit...** button for **Custom Setup** in the effect controls tab.



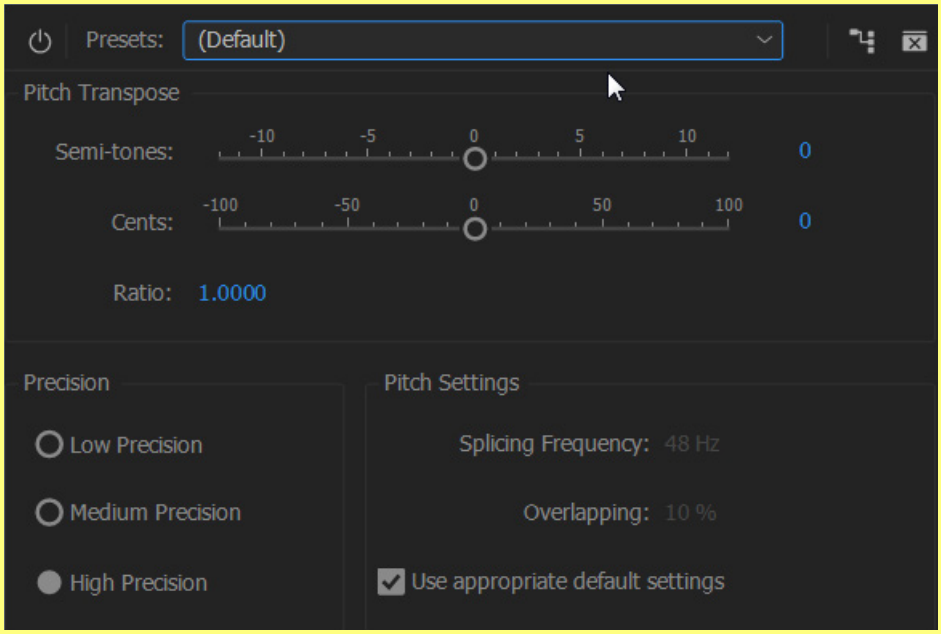
Pitch Shifter -

Raises or lowers the pitch of your dialogue.

Use High Precision to disguise an informant's voice.

Use Low Precision for cool robot voices.

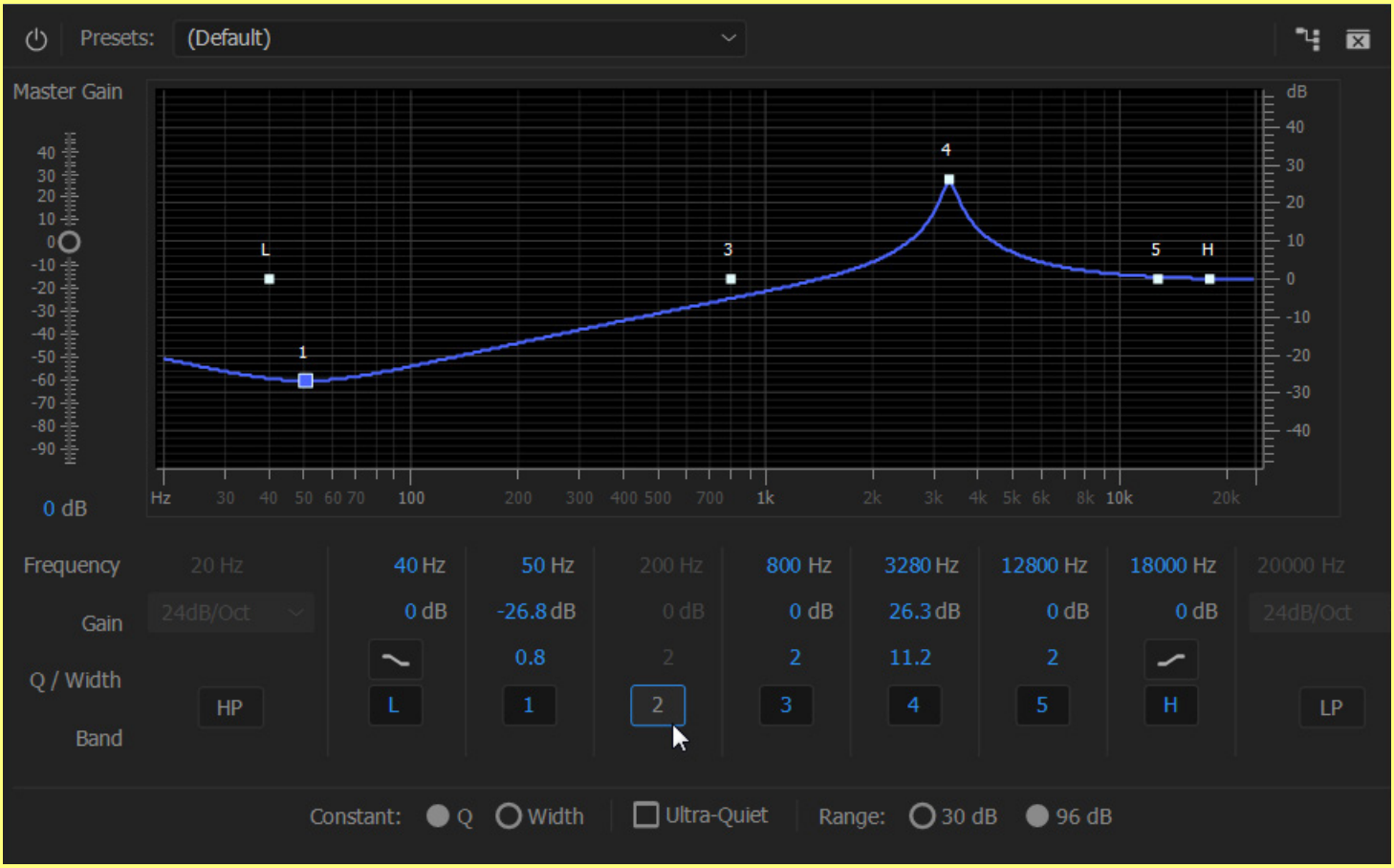
Presets include **Angry Gerbil** and **The Dark Lord**.



Parametric Equalizer (EQ)

There is an EQ in the Essential Sound panel but I want you to understand how an equalizer works.

The EQ effect allows you to strengthen or weaken specific frequencies of your audio clip. Low frequencies are the bass end of the audible spectrum and are visible on the left. High frequencies are the treble, visible on the right.



There are seven channels, each with the following controls:

Frequency allows you to fine tune the pitch of a channel.

Gain raises or lowers the volume of each channel.

Q controls the width of the peak or valley created by the channel. In this example, channel 1 has a low Q, channel 4 has a high Q.

Clicking on the channel number will disable that channel. In the example above I've disabled channel 2.

Some Useful EQ Recipes:

These come from Jarle Leirpoll's wonderful book, *The Cool Stuff in Premiere Pro*.

Warm up a male voice: +4 dB @ 200 Hz

Warm up a female voice: +4 dB @ 400 Hz

Increase clarity, male voice: +5 dB @ 3000 Hz

Increase clarity, female voice: +5 dB @ 4000 Hz

There's also one called a **music notch** which subtly lowers the frequency of the human voice when placed on a music clip. This allows you to have background music that doesn't step all over your dialogue.

Music notch: -6 dB @ 1844 Hz, Q = 0.35

Fill Left with Right and **Fill Right with Left**

These effects will make one stereo channel mimic its counterpart. This is useful if your stereo clip has one dead channel or one channel that was recorded at a lower volume for safety.

Highpass and Lowpass

Lowpass cuts off all the audio above a specified frequency.

Highpass cuts off all the audio below a specified frequency.

These are useful for removing background noise or electronic hums or whines. Lowpass is also good for removing a *Mosquito* - a high pitched sound that most adults over the age of 25 can't hear.

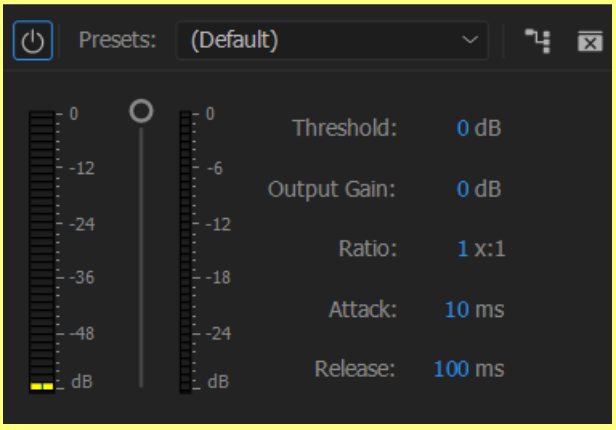
Hard Limiter

The limiter brings down loud noises without clipping them. It's useful for door slams and other audio spikes.

Tube-modeled Compressor

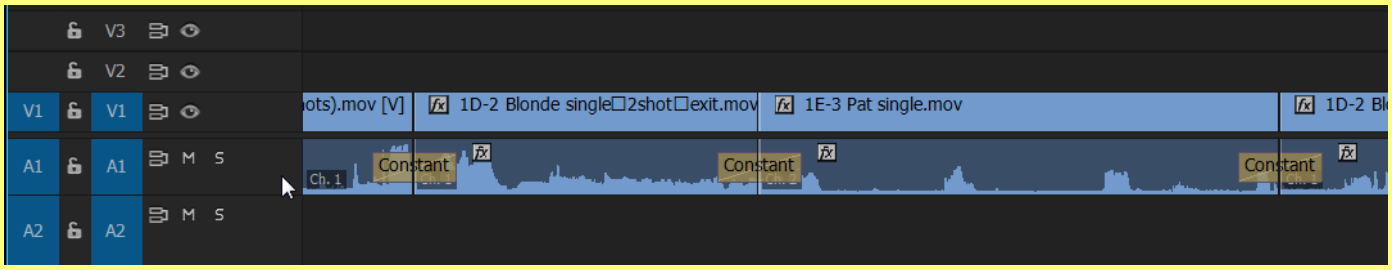
This evens out volume extremes by bringing loud sounds down and quiet sounds up. If your background sound is too loud this will only make it worse.

Play with **Ratio** and **Threshold** to hear it in action.



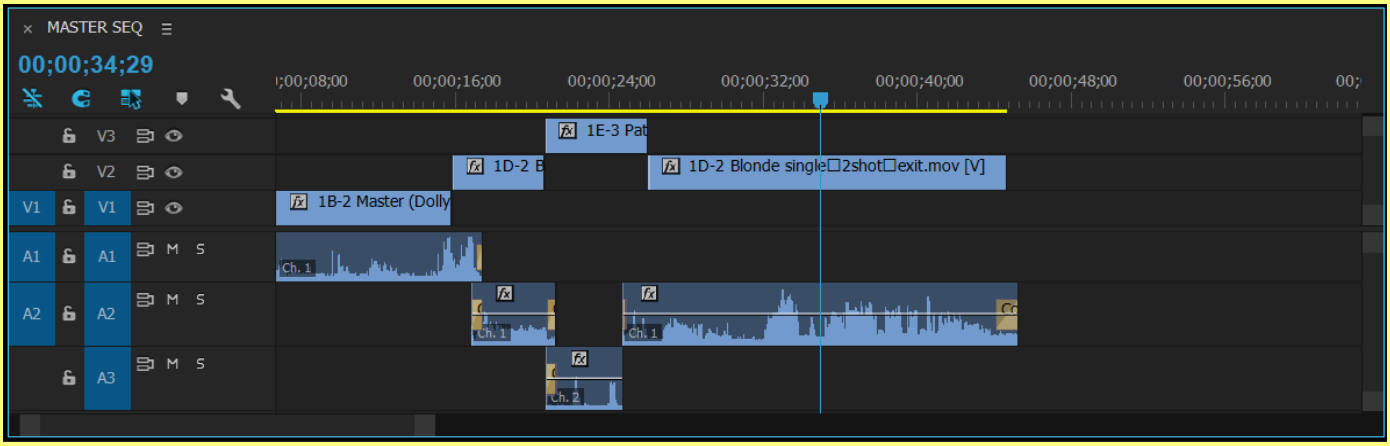
ROOKIE MISTAKES

Mistake #1:
Putting all dialogue on one track.



Don't do this. If you use fades your actors will start and end their lines too quietly. If you don't use fades, they'll cut each other off and you might get some nasty pops.

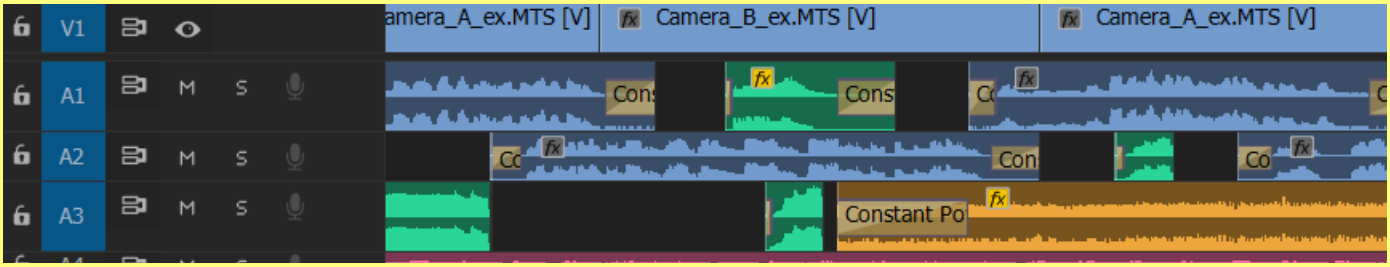
Mistake #2:
Checkerboarding video tracks.



NO! Don't pull this amateur night crap. Put all of your primary video on V1.*

You're going to need those other tracks for adjustment layers, titles and composite video clips. Doing this also increases your chances of throwing something out of sync.

Mistake #3:
Putting SFX or music on a dialogue track.



Designate dialogue tracks for dialogue clips only. The same goes for SFX, music and ambience tracks. This will be important later if you want to use the track mixer or send your film to a professional sound house.

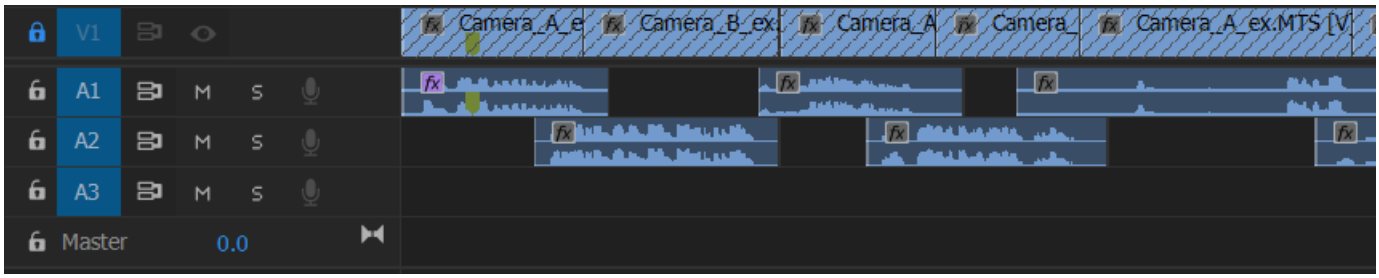
*It's totally fine to put B-roll for documentaries and interviews on V2.

So how does all of this work together? Let's take a look at a typical project's audio workflow:

Typical Audio Workflow

1. Get picture lock first.

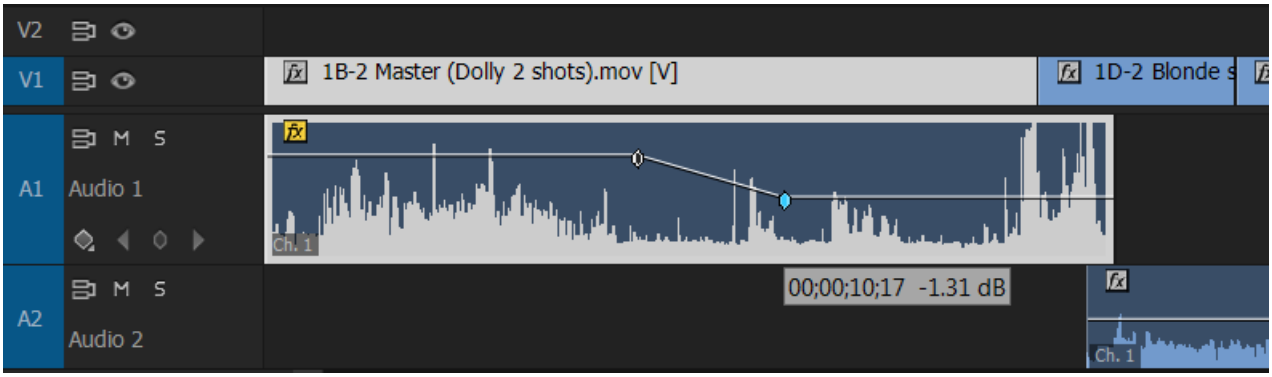
- Cut your project with L-cuts and checkerboarded dialogue clips.
- Lock the picture track.



2. Auto-Match all dialogue clips.

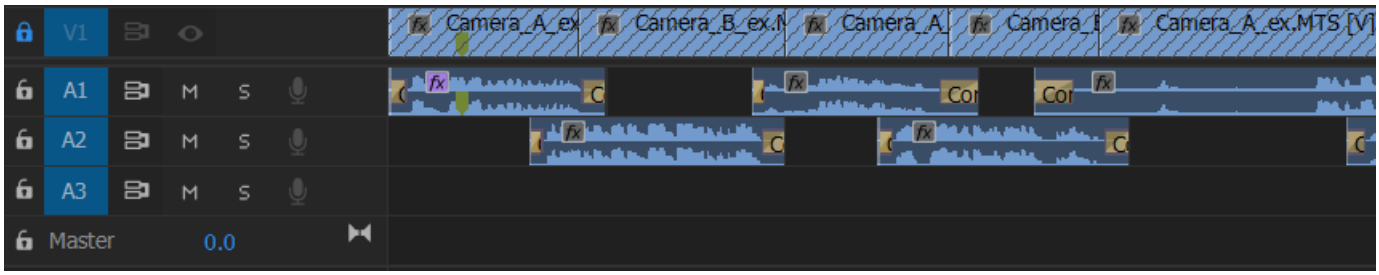
- Select all of your clips.
- Open the Essential Sound panel (**Window > Essential Sound**)
- Choose **Dialogue.**
- Click **Auto-Match**.

3. Make any necessary volume adjustments in the timeline.



4. Add handles and crossfades to all clips.

Both ends of every clip. You may have to make some fades very short, but even a fade that's only a few frames long can prevent an audio pop. Be sure your fades do not step on any dialogue.

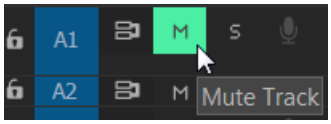


5. Sweeten dialogue clips.

You may have to do this one clip at a time:

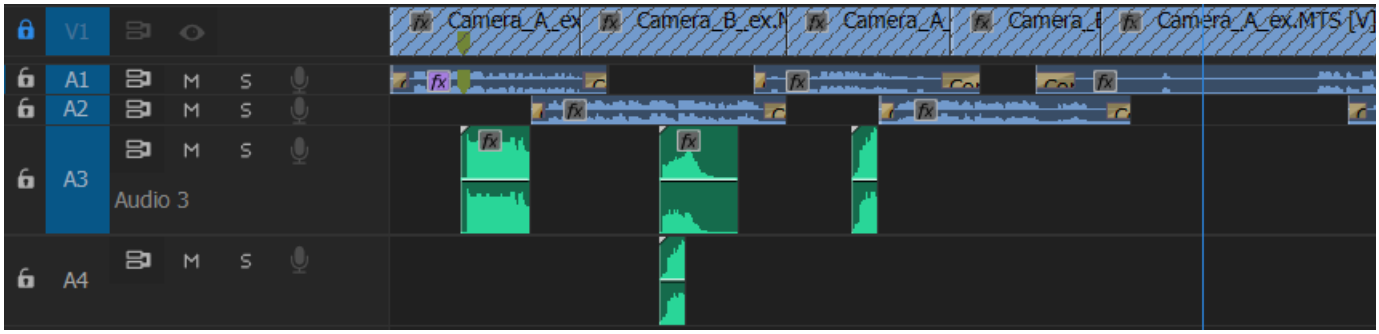
- Use the **Repair** tab of the Essential Sound panel if you need to clean up noise.
- Use the **Creative** tab if you need to add reverb.
- The **Mute** button will silence a track; the **Solo** button will silence all others.

These will help you figure out which clips need work.



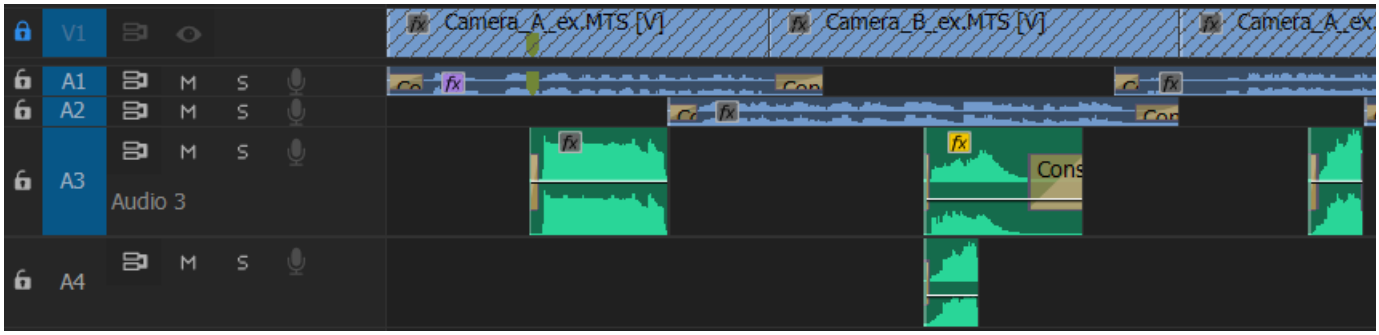
6. Add Sound Effects.

Don't mix up the tracks - only dialogue clips on dialogue tracks, only SFX clips on SFX tracks. If you need more tracks, drag a clip below the master track and a new one will be created.



7. Adjust volume and add fades.

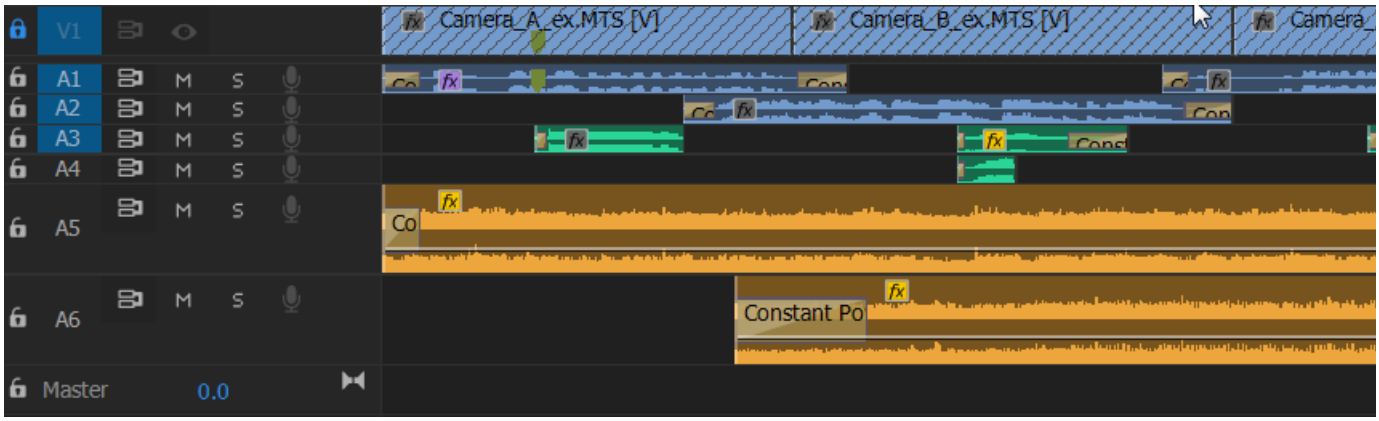
Don't auto-match, just use the volume line to set SFX to a volume compatible with your dialogue. Add small fades to both sides of every clip. In the example below, some fades may not be visible because they are only two or three frames long.



8. Sweeten SFX clips.

Use the Essential Sound panel to add reverb or pan.

9. Add Ambience and Walla. Adjust volume and add fades.



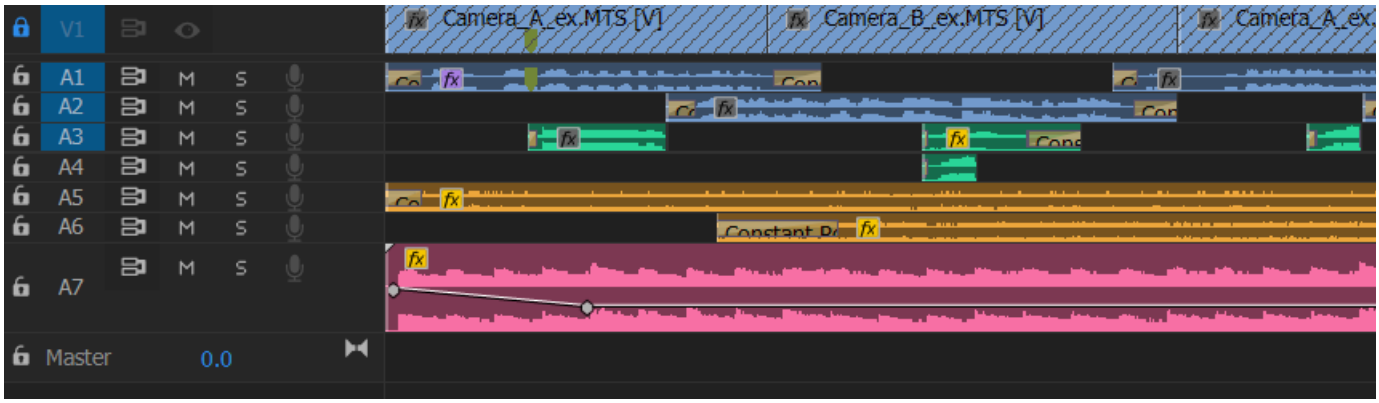
I've changed the color of my ambience clips to make them easier to see.

10. Sweeten ambience and walla clips.

Seriously, man - play with that **Stereo Width** slider.

11. Add Music. Adjust volume and add fades if necessary.

A lot of music tracks have the intro and exit fades baked into them.



I've changed the color of my music clip to make it easier to see.

12. Adjust overall gain if necessary.

If your clips sound good relative to each other but you need to raise the volume of the project as a whole, do this:

- Select the entire project.
- Right click and choose **Audio Gain...**
- Type in the desired amount where it says **Adjust Gain by:**
- Hit **OK**.

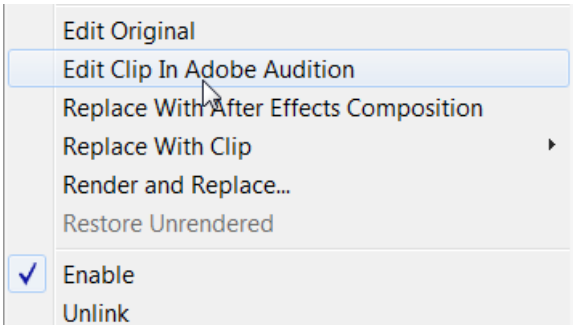
Last Resort: Removing Background Noise in Audition

If you can't clean background noise with any of the above features, you can send your clip to Adobe Audition. This is a pretty aggressive feature so be careful - too much will make your audio sound like it's underwater.

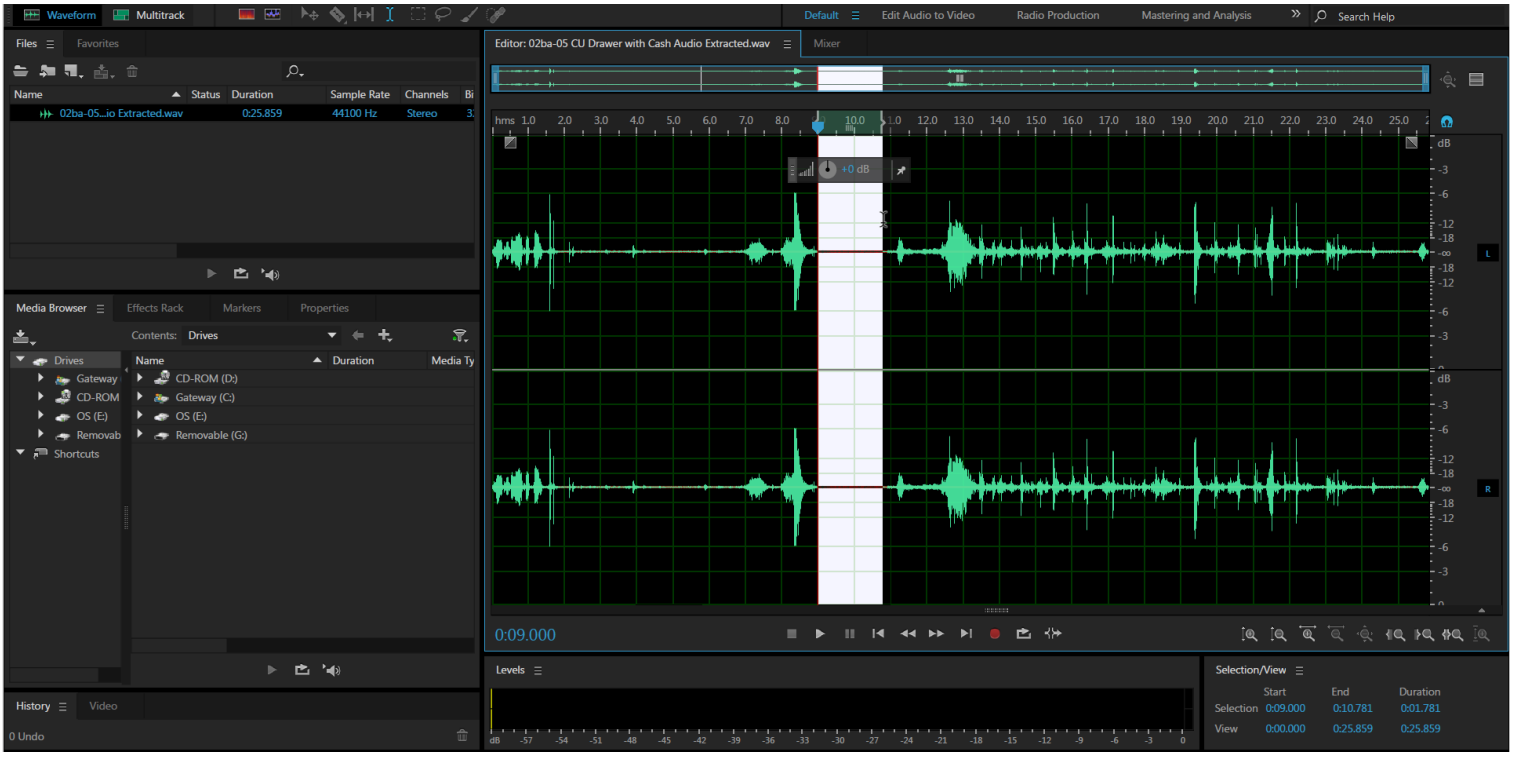
To remove background noise in Audition:

1. Right click on the clip in the timeline and select **Edit Clip In Adobe Audition**.

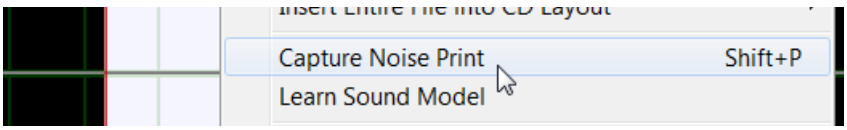
   Audition will open and you'll see a waveform of your clip's audio.



2. Find a clean section of room tone and select it by dragging the mouse over it. Get the longest piece you can without any other background noises.

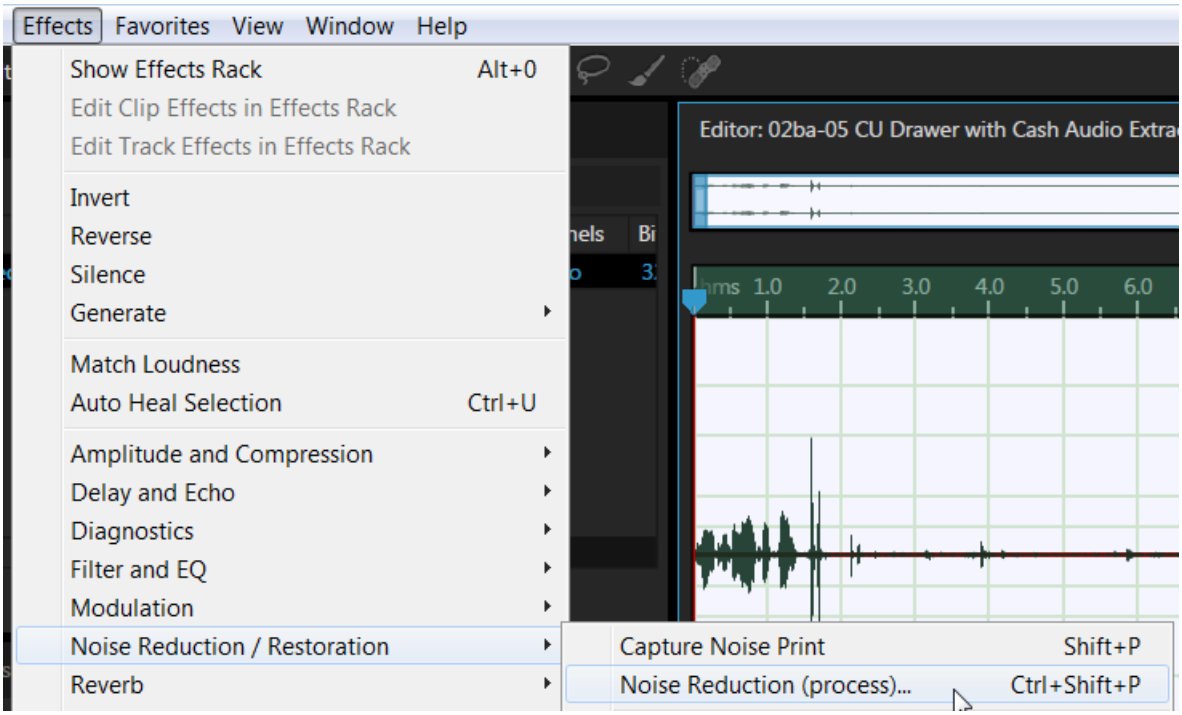


3. Right click on the selected area and choose **Capture Noise Print**.



4. Select the entire clip by dragging the mouse over it:

5. From the **Effects Menu** at the top, choose **Noise Reduction / Restoration** > **Noise Reduction (process)...**



6. This opens a window for the Noise Reduction effect. While listening to your clip, play with the **Noise Reduction** and **Reduce by** sliders to remove as much noise as possible without making your actors sound muddy or underwater. Click **Apply** when you are satisfied.

7. **File > Save**.
   Your changes will not take effect in Premiere until you save.

Fun Fact!

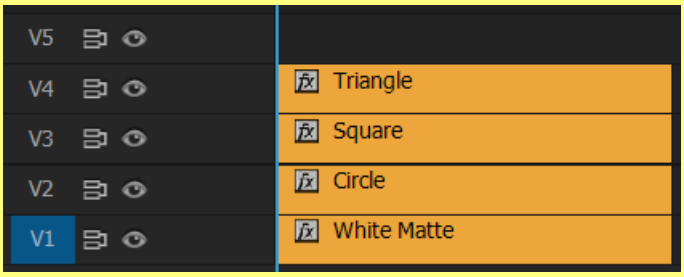
This is actually the same process used by the **Reduce Noise** feature in the Essential Sound panel. The difference is that in Audition you will have more precise control identifying what is and isn't noise.

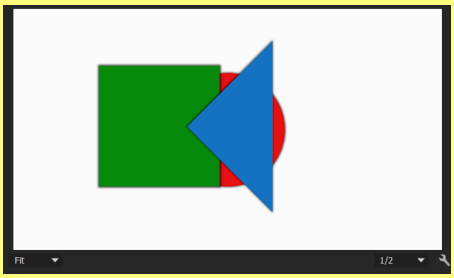
7. Titles & Compositing

What is Compositing?

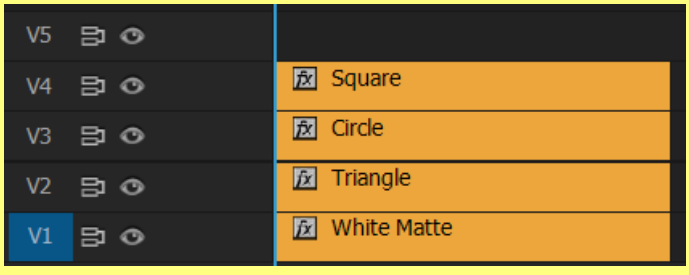
Compositing is combining layers of video. Video tracks are always viewed from the top down - opaque parts of V2 will always cover up V1 and opaque parts of V3 will cover both.

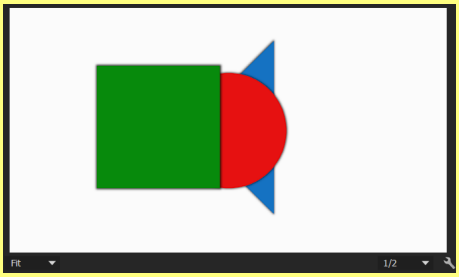
Here I've layered three shapes on a white matte. In the first example, The triangle is completely visible because it's on the top layer:



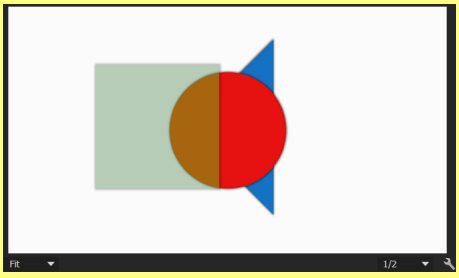


If I move the square to the top layer it becomes completely visible:





I can also see through a layer by changing its opacity:



Titles

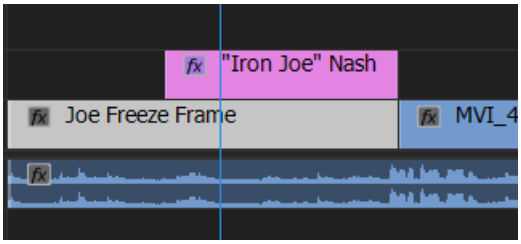
The simplest form of compositing is a title card.

To make a new title:

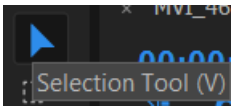
1. Select the **Type Tool** (T).

2. Click anywhere on the program monitor and begin typing.

3. A new title clip will appear in the timeline. It can be moved or trimmed just like any other clip, and you can apply effects and transitions as well.



4. Use the **Selection Tool** (V) to move or resize your title.



5. Use the glorious new **Essential Graphics** panel to perfect your text layer.

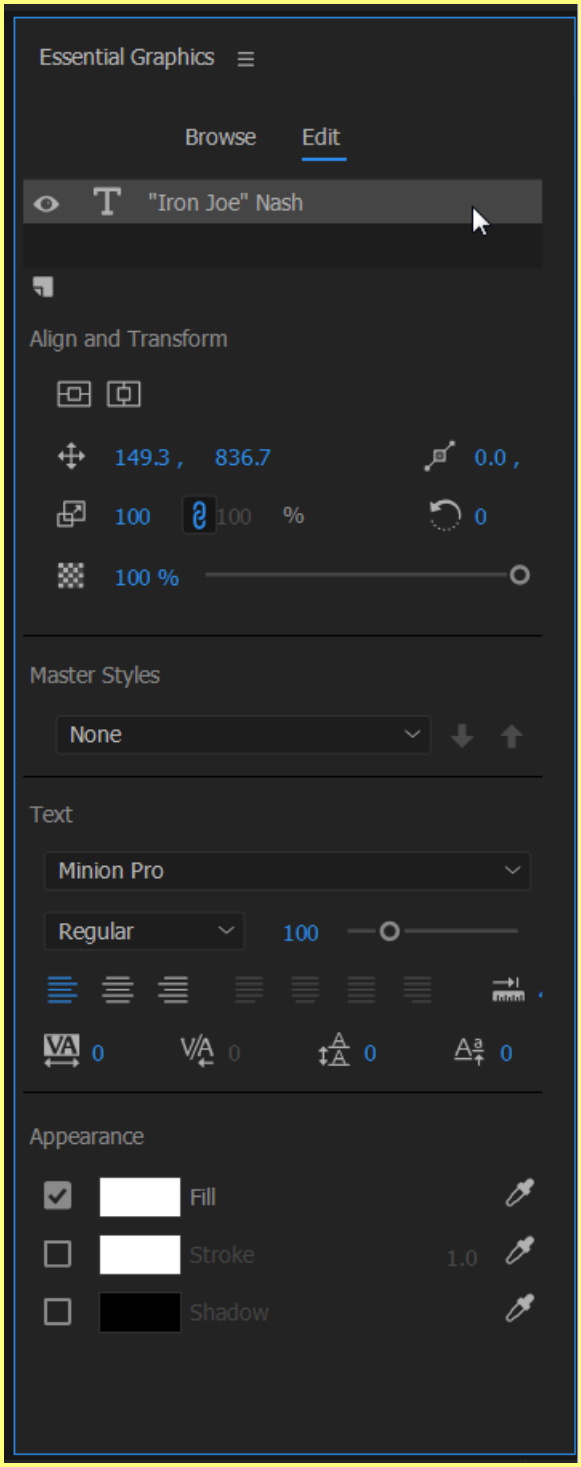
The Essential Graphics Panel

To access the Essential Graphics Panel, simply click **Window > Essential Graphics**

Make sure your text layer is selected.

Add new layer.*

These little guys will center your text horizontally and vertically.



These control position, scale, rotation and rotation anchor point.

This selects the font.

This allows you to make your text bold or italic.

This controls font size.

Fill controls your text color.

Stroke creates an outline.

Shadow creates a drop shadow.

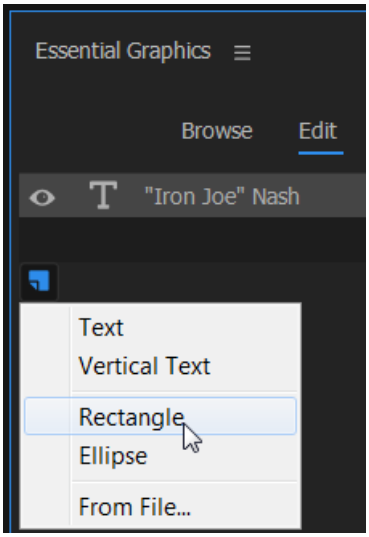
Eyedroppers let you match an existing color.

* The **New Layer** button allows you to create additional text or shape layers to the same text clip.

If you need multiple title cards with the same attributes, it's easy to duplicate them:

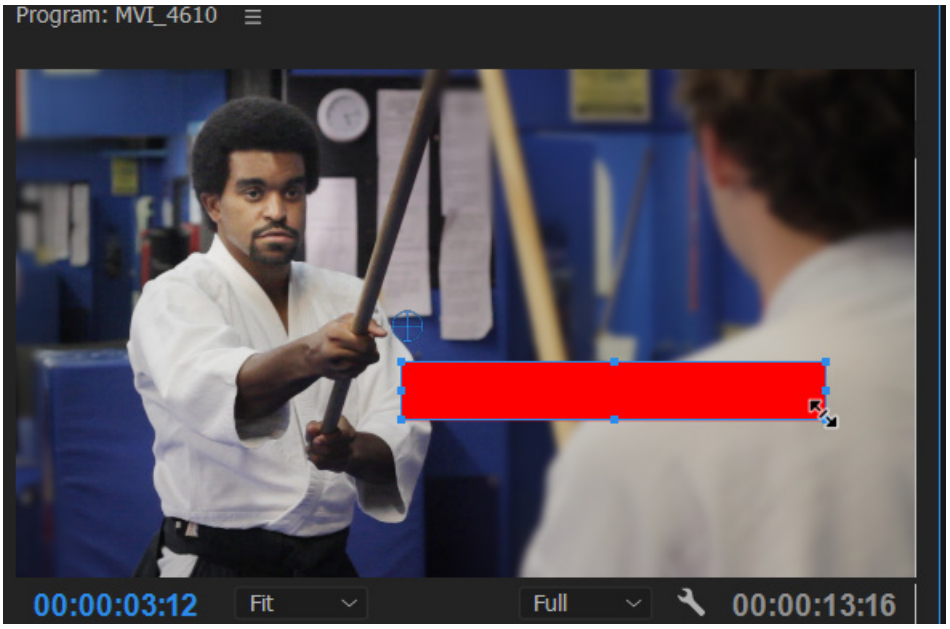
To duplicate a title card:
OPT + drag the title to a new part of your timeline. (alt + drag on pc)

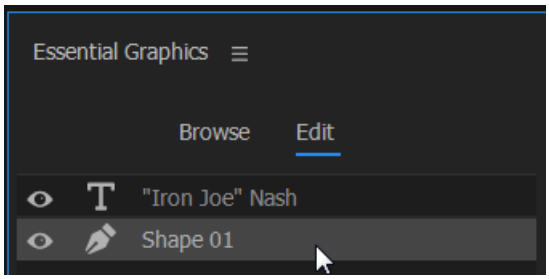
To make a solid mask under a lower third:



1. Click the **New Layer** icon and select **Rectangle**.
   A red box will appear on your monitor.

2. Drag the rectangle out to cover your text.



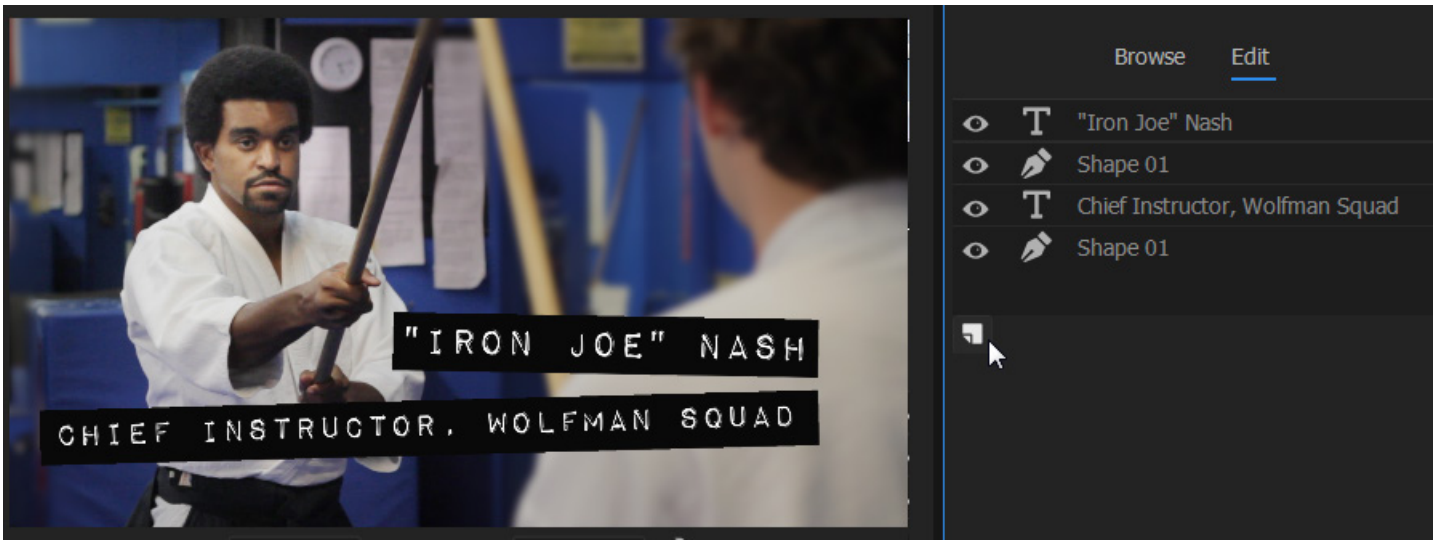


3. In the Essential Graphics panel, drag the shape layer below the text layer to reveal the text.

4. Use the Essential Graphics panel to adjust your text and shape layers as needed. You may have as many layers as you like on a single clip.

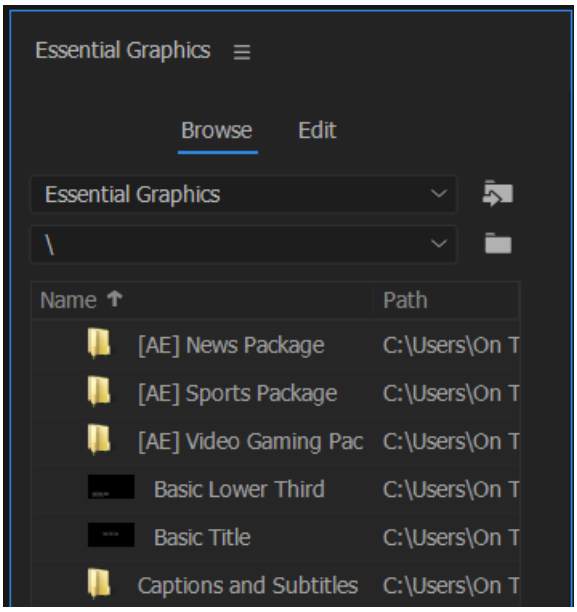
5. **PLAY**. Try animating your lower third's entrances and exits by keyframing the position setting in the effect controls tab. Put your mask and your shape on separate clips and have them enter from different parts of the frame. Try lowering the opacity of your mask. Or adding transitions that would be far too garish to use on regular footage. Try adding sound effects as the lower thirds enter and exit.

Here I've rotated each text layer 1° off-center to make them look like hastily applied embossing tape.



Motion Graphics Templates

Adobe keeps coming up with cool stuff faster than I can update this tutorial. A **Motion Graphics Template** is a template of text and graphics. That move.



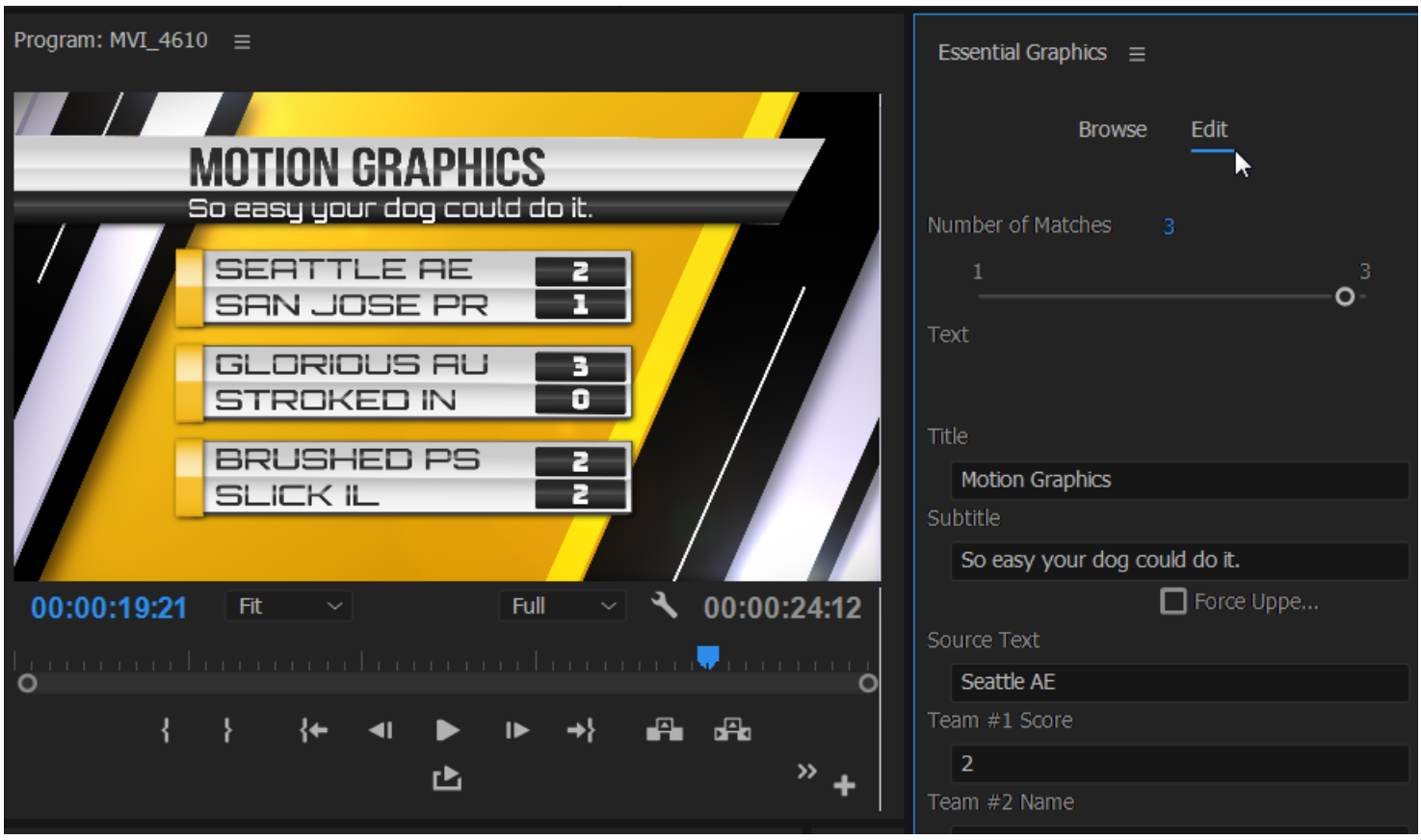
To use a motion graphics template:

1. Click **Browse** in the **Essential Graphics Panel**.

2. Choose one of the dozens of prefab templates and drag it to your timeline.

3. Click **Edit** in the **Essential Graphics Panel**.

4. Adjust text, color and other parameters as needed.



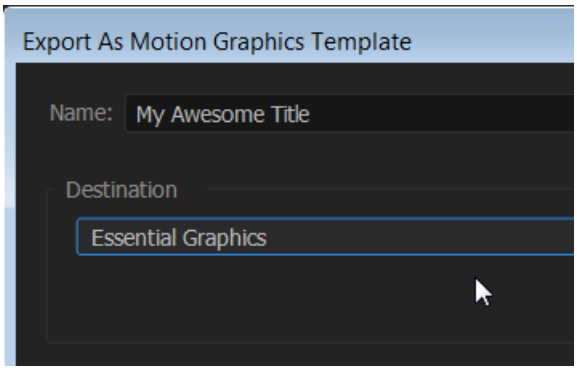
You can also save your own titles as motion graphics. Effects and even keyframes will be saved as well.

To save a title as a motion graphics template:

1. Right click on the title in the timeline.

2. Select **Export As Motion Graphics Template...**

3. Name your graphic and hit **OK**.



Fun Facts About Titles and Compositing

The transparent part of a clip is called the **Alpha Channel**. It is frequently represented with a gray checkerboard pattern:

The boxes visible in the frame denote the **Title Safe** and **Action Safe** areas.

It's best to keep your text confined to the inner box (title safe) and important action confined to the outer box (action safe). This was more important before everyone's TV or monitor had a flat screen, but staying within safe areas still looks better.

I could show you how to access these margins, but seriously - just eyeball it.

Fonts: Fonts are an easy and fun way to jazz up your title cards. The font used above is *All Exes Must Die* by Andrew Pinkard.

Go to dafont.com and browse through all the free fonts. It's a rabbit hole. I'll be here when you get back.

LEARN TO STEAL: The way to become a better title designer is to steal from others. Watch advertisements and intro credits with a critical eye. Design choices go in and out of fashion; for example, right now many advertisements seem to favor white text over a blurred background or blocky white text on a red band.

Creativity does not exist in a void. It's the sum of all of your influences stewing together in the back of your head. Stealing verbatim from one source is plagiarism. Combining and transforming many diverse sources is art.

All of those essay-heavy analytical film classes you take are not preparing you for trivia night. They are teaching you to steal.

ROOKIE MISTAKE: Misspelled Titles

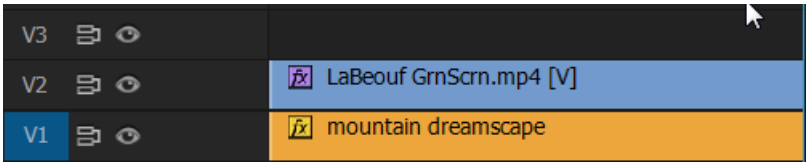
There is no spell-check anywhere in Premiere Pro. Misspelled titles make you look stupid.

Keying

Keying turns selected pixels clear so we can see through parts of our image. Pixels are defined by their *HSL* (Hue, Saturation, Lightness) values. This means we can key out any pixels in a certain color range (like a very saturated green) or brightness range (like completely black or white) or a combination of the two. The most common use of keying is the green screen.

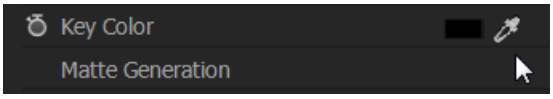
To key out a green screen:

1. Put your background layer on V1 and your green screen footage on V2.



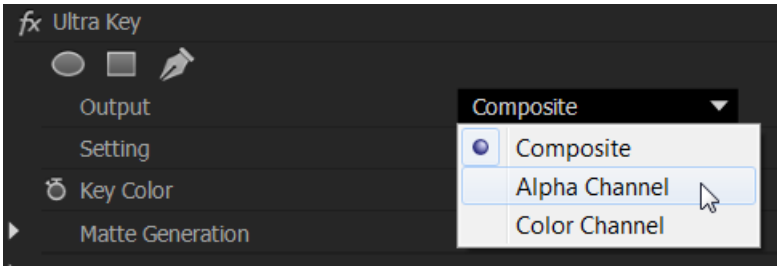
2. Apply The **Ultra Key** effect to V2.

3. In the Effect Controls, click on the eyedropper where it says **Key Color**.



4. Select a patch of green near the subject.

5. Change the **Output** setting to **Alpha Channel**.



Your program monitor should look like this. All of the black is alpha channel (clear) and all of the white is visible.

The goal now is to make a crisp silhouette; all of the background should be black and all of the subject should be white with no gray or stray pixels in either.

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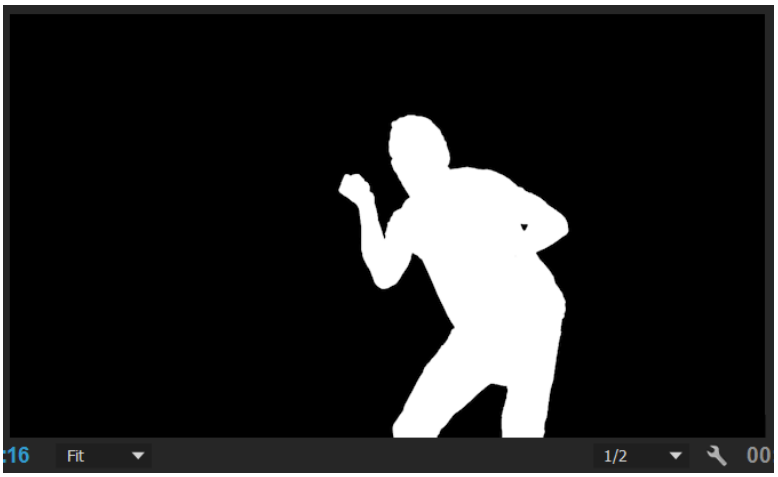
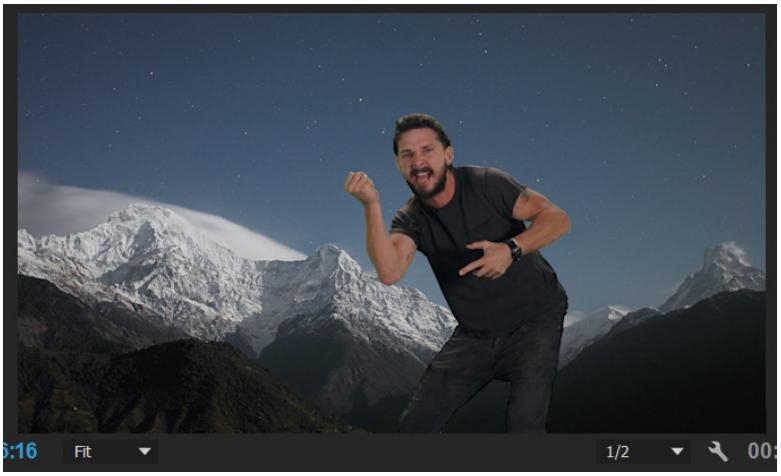
6. If the green screen has been lit properly, getting a clean key should be easy. Go into the Ultra Key's controls and try raising the settings for **Matte Generation > Pedestal** and **Matte Cleanup > Contrast**. Play around with other Matte Generation controls if need be.

Play through your footage to be sure the key looks clean for the whole clip and not just one frame.



7. In the effect controls, switch the **Output** setting back to **Composite**.

8. If you have a green line around your subject, try raising the settings for **Matte Cleanup > Choke** and **Matte Cleanup > Soften**. Use these sparingly - too much choke causes "helmet hair."



9. If you have difficult areas at the edge of the frame but a clean key around your subject, you can always apply a mask in the **Opacity** effect to cut away unwanted areas. Be certain your subject does not enter the cropped parts of the frame.

Use the **Pen Tool** ( ) if you want to create a more precise mask. You can even track the mask to follow your subject.

Again, words cannot express how much easier this is now than it was before masking and tracking were built into every effect.

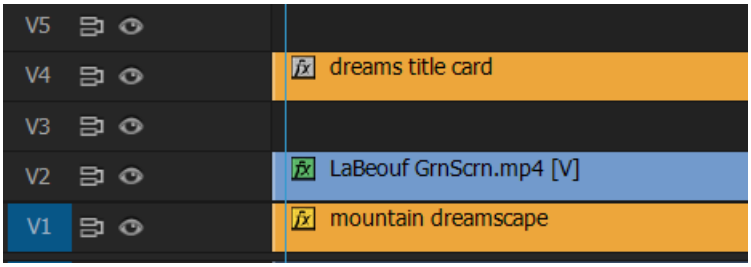
Track Matte Key

This is higher level stuff, but I have faith in you so here we go. Track mattes let you key out a specific shape instead of an HSL value. A track matte takes up three video tracks:

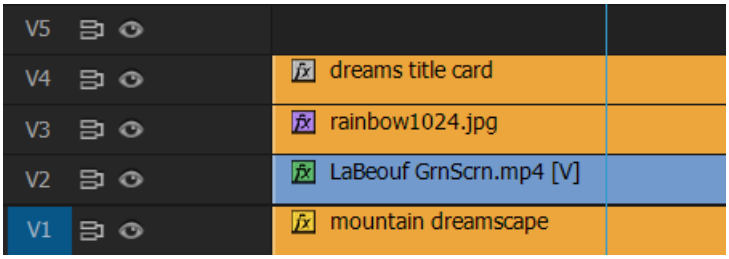
Top Track = shape template
Middle Track = clip to be seen inside the template, with **Track Matte Key** effect
Bottom Track = background clip

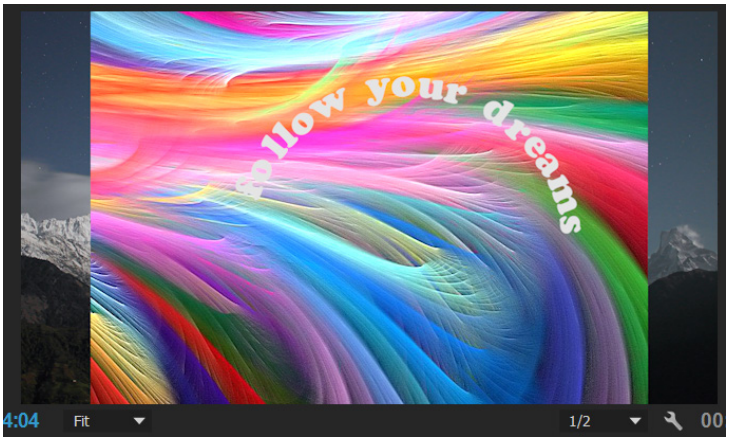
For example, let's say I wanted to put an inspiring message on the green screen clip from the last example. **Here's what I would do:**

1. Put a title card two layers above my top video track (V4):

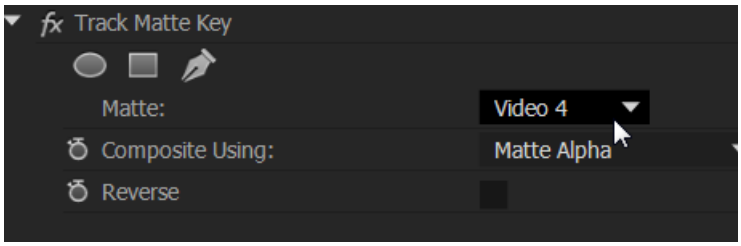


2. Put the clip that's going to fill my text on the track in between (V3):





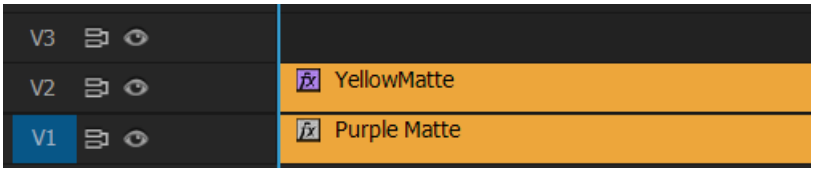
3. Put the **Track Matte Key** effect on the filler clip (V3). In its effect controls, set **Matte** to **Video 4**, the track that our title card is on.



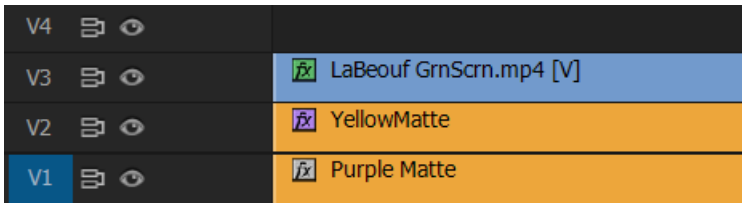
Okay, that was kind of awful. Let's use the Track Matte Key effect to create a two-color silhouette, like the old ipod commercials:

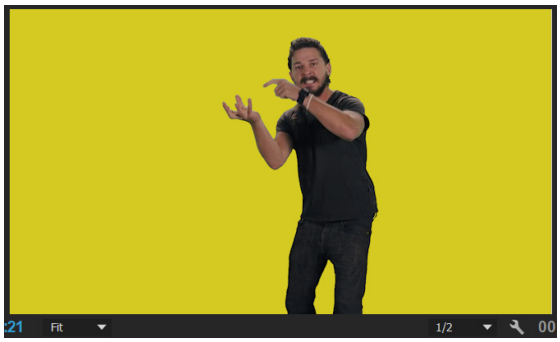
1. Create a new color matte (**File > New > Color Matte**). Hit **OK** and choose a vibrant color. Put it on V1.

2. Create a second color matte - make sure it is a contrasting color - and put it on V2.

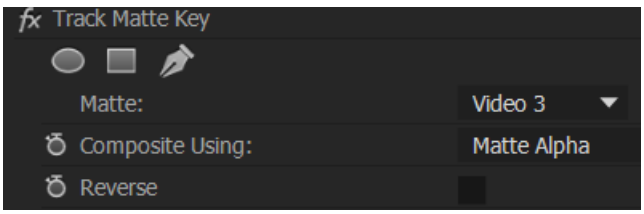


3. Put your green screen footage on V3. Key out the screen using the method described earlier.





4. Apply the **Track Matte Key** effect to V2. In the effect controls, set **Matte** to **Video 3**.



8. Color Correction

Color correction is too complicated for an introductory text, but we can get you started on the right foot and show you how to learn more on your own. Let's begin with some rules:

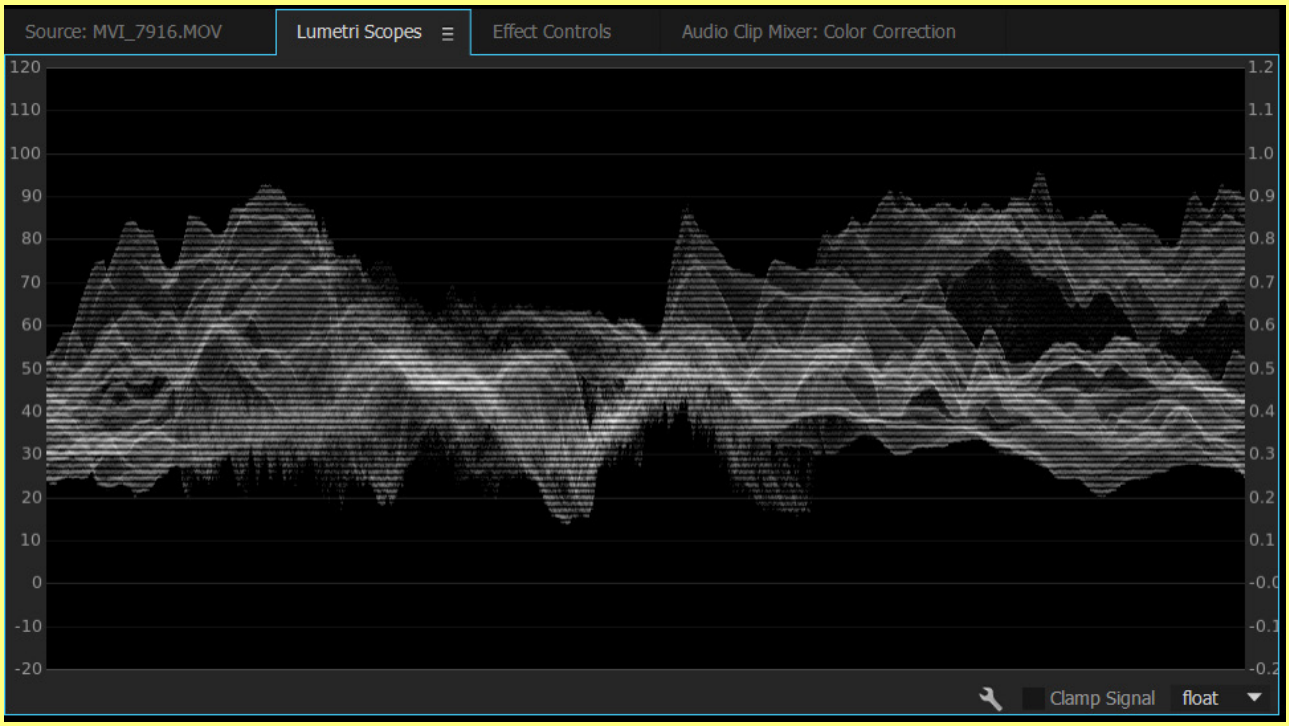
RULE #1:
Always work in maximum bit depth.

Go to **Sequence > Sequence Settings** and make sure that **Maximum Bit Depth** is on. This will allow more subtle variation in color and prevent banding.
(Leave **Maximum Render Quality** off unless you plan to resize at the end.)

RULE #2:
Trust your scopes.

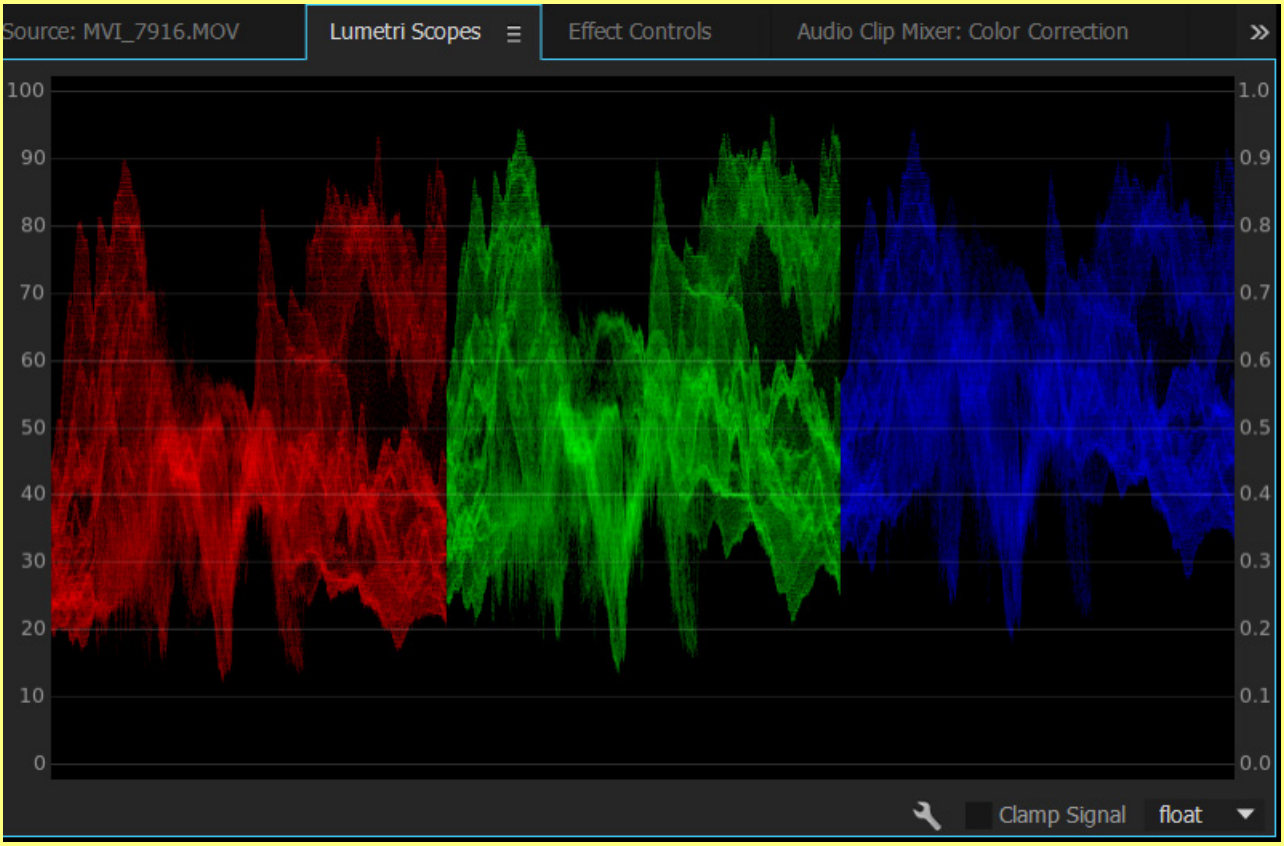
We don't need expensive, perfectly calibrated monitors to correct color. We just need to know how to read the Lumetri Scopes. Here are the three we'll be using:

Waveform (Luma)
The waveform monitor indicates exposure. The horizontal axis corresponds to your video image from left to right. The vertical axis shows luminance from -20 to 120 IRE. We want to stay between 0 and 100 IRE.



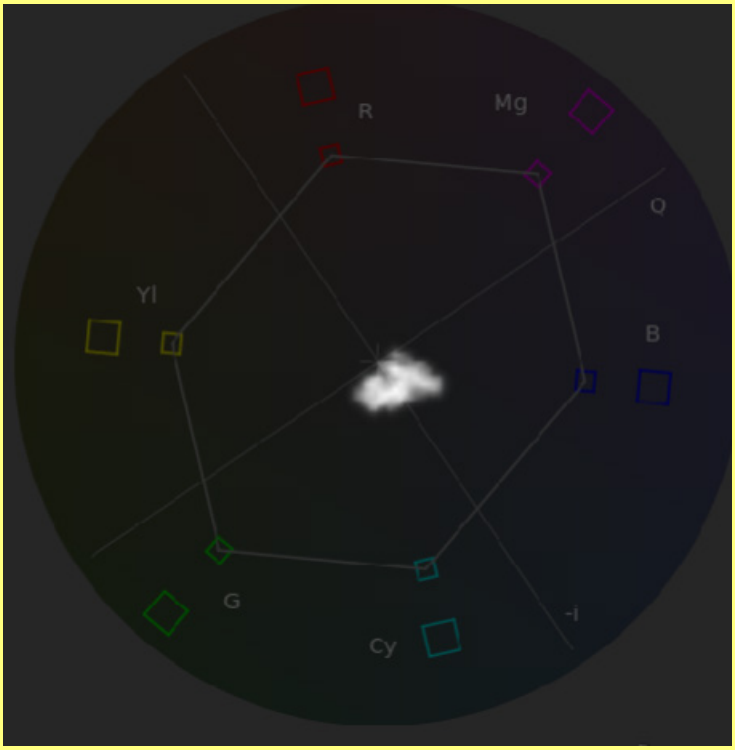
Parade (RGB)

The RGB Parade provides a separate waveform monitor for each color channel:



Vectorscope YUV

The Vectorscope evaluates color. Direction indicates hue and distance from center indicates saturation. The oblong hexagon shape indicates the maximum saturation we would want for a broadcast image. We will use the vectorscope to calibrate *memory colors*: skin, sky and grass.



All of the scopes we've seen show readings for the same frame of video.

The waveform monitor shows us that the image is low contrast - the shadows aren't very dark and the highlights aren't very bright.

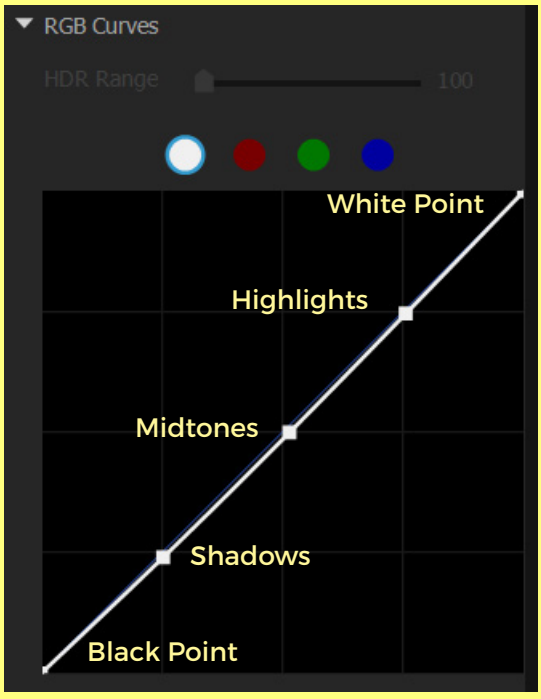
The RGB parade tells us that the blue channel is brighter than the red.

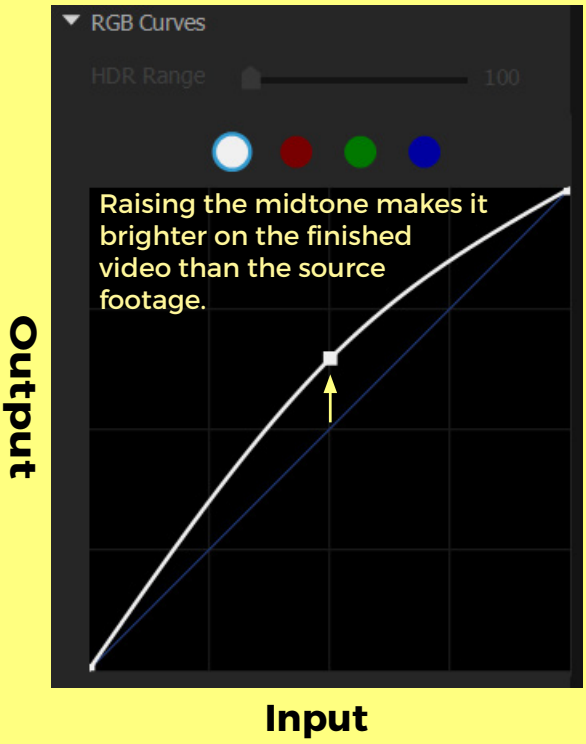
The vectorscope shows us that all of our image is on the blue/cyan/green side of the color spectrum but isn't too terribly saturated.

Here is the frame: a flat (low contrast) image whose color is skewed blue because the camera was not properly white balanced.

How to Use RGB Curves:

There are many tools we can use to correct the image; the easiest to learn on is the RGB Curves. A curve is a ratio of the input to output luminance - how bright the source media is compared to the finished product.



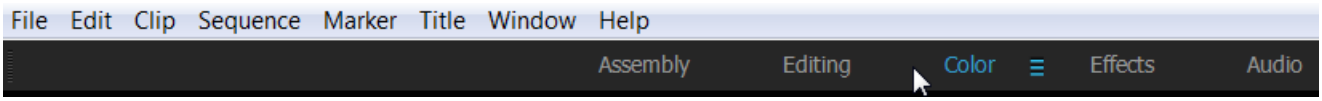


A single mouse click will make a point on the curve that can be dragged up to brighten or down to darken. The white curve will control the overall luminance of your video; clicking the red, green or blue dots will give you a curve that only controls one of the three color channels.

Before We Begin

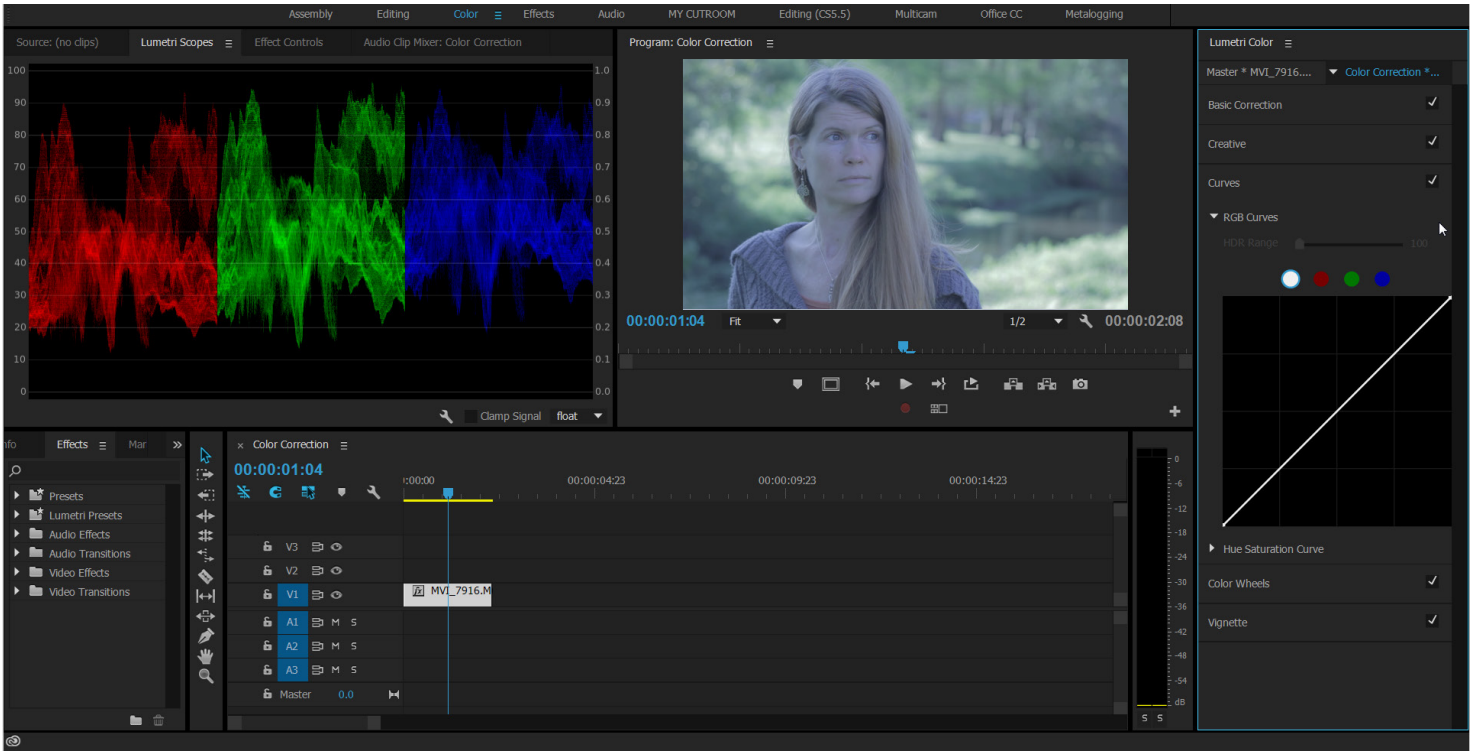
Find the hero shot: Find the most important shot of your scene. This is your **hero shot**, and we'll be matching the rest of your scene to the corrections we do to it.

Set your workspace: At the top of the screen is a bar containing various workspaces. Select **Color**.



Select the RGB Parade: In the source monitor, select the tab labeled **Lumetri Scopes**. Click on the little wrench at the bottom (Settings) and select **Presets > Parade RGB**.

Open the RGB Curves: In the **Lumetri Color Panel** on the right, click **Curves > RGB Curves**.



Premiere Pro has many tools for enhancing and correcting color. The process I'm about to describe will give you the basic theory behind professional, high end color correction. Once you understand it, feel free to achieve the same ends with different tools or even different software.

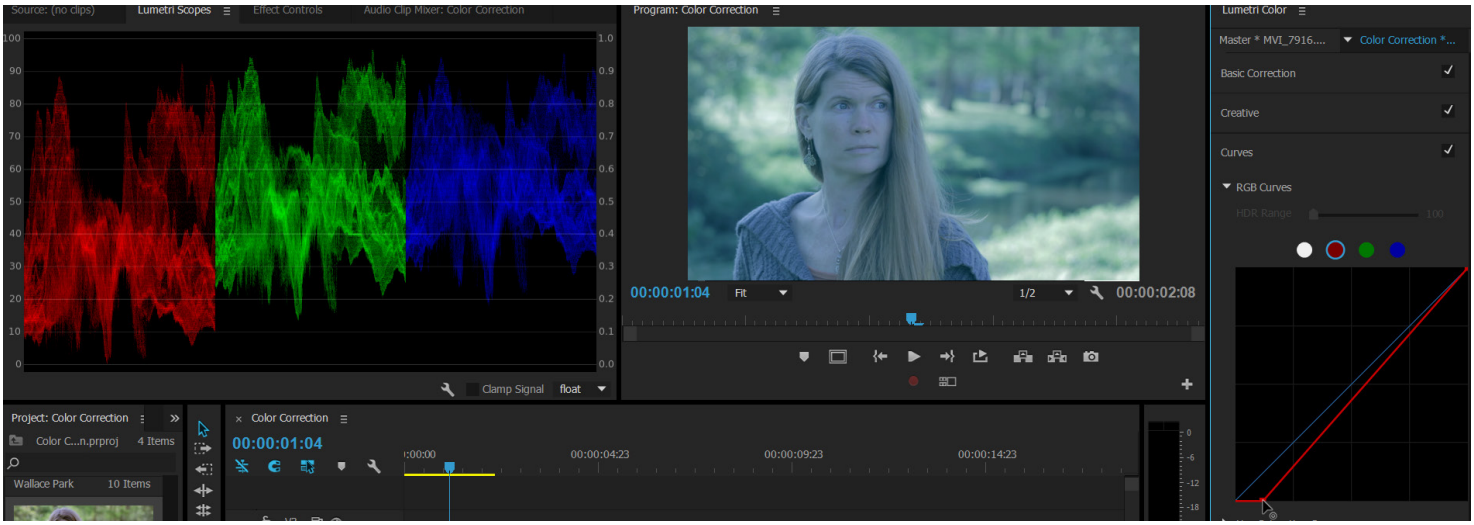
You will not always want to put this much effort into correction. For smaller projects there are plenty of tools that will allow you to quickly tweak color, exposure or contrast. Don't feel obligated to go through the whole dance when all you need is a quick fix.

Primary Color Correction

The **Primary** corrects the entire frame. The following steps must be done in order:

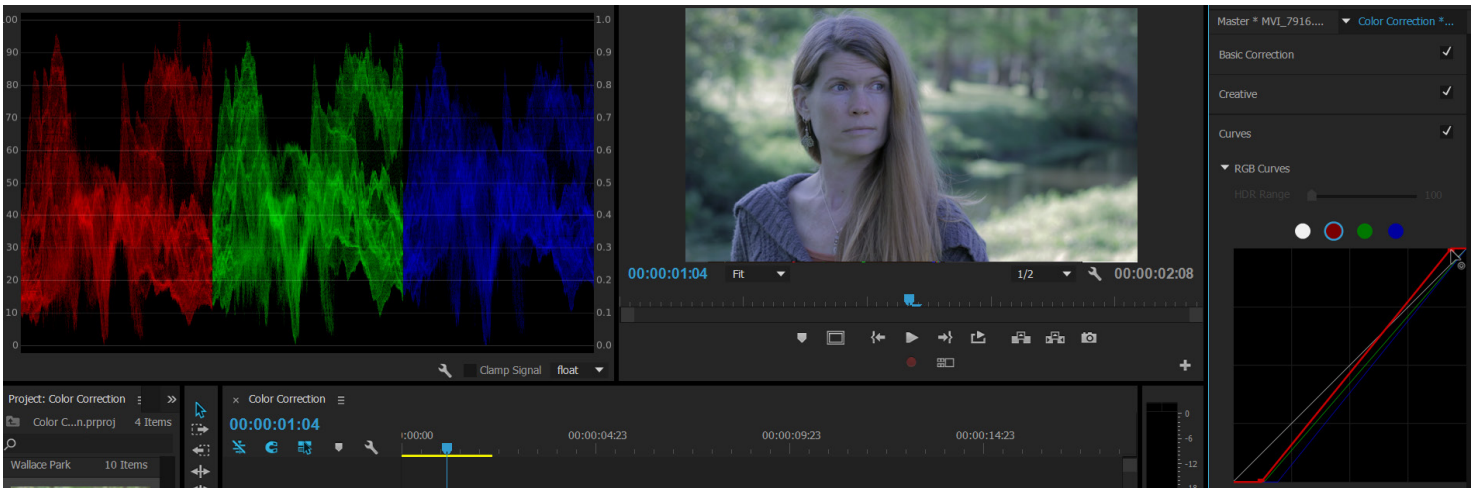
1. Set the Black Levels

On the RGB Curves, click the red dot to select only the red channel. Drag its black point down until the darkest part of the red channel on the RGB Parade touches 0 IRE. Repeat for green and blue.



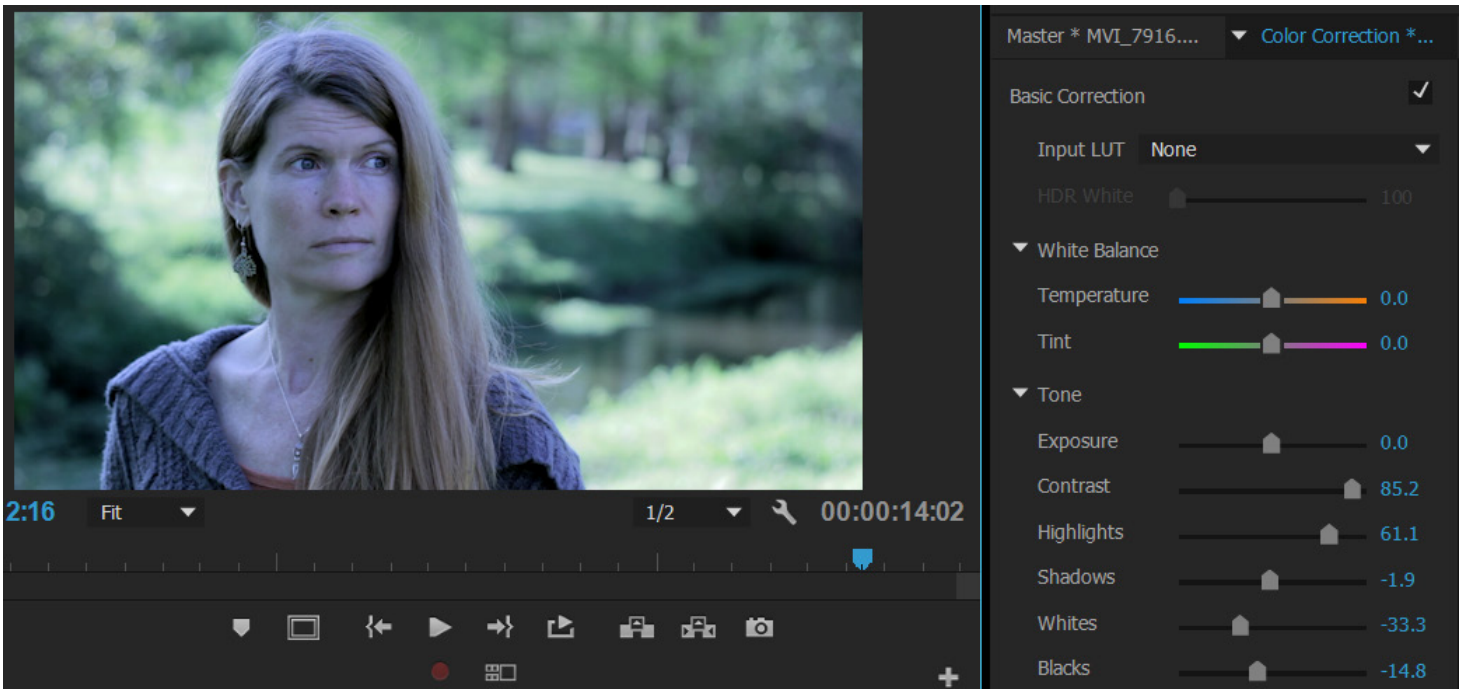
2. Set the White Levels

Drag the white point of the red curve until the brightest part of the red channel on the RGB parade touches 100 IRE. Repeat for green and blue.



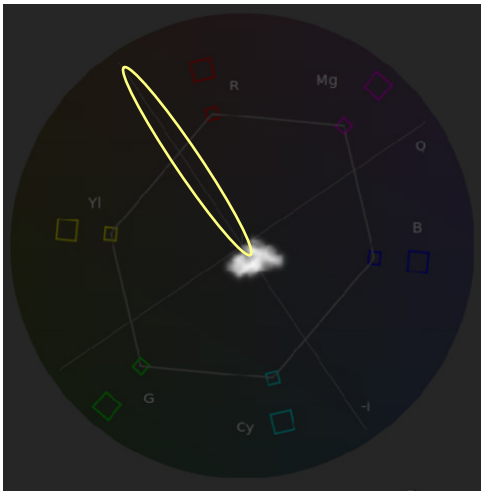
3. Adjust Contrast

In the Lumetri Color panel, choose **Basic Correction > Tone**. Play with the sliders until you have a pleasing level of contrast. This is art, not science.



4. Adjust Color

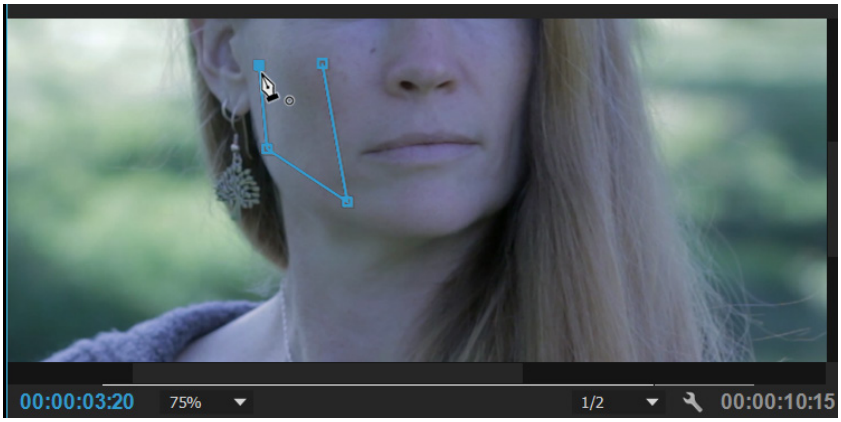
We're not going for our awesome blockbuster look yet. The primary correction is only to get an accurate color representation.

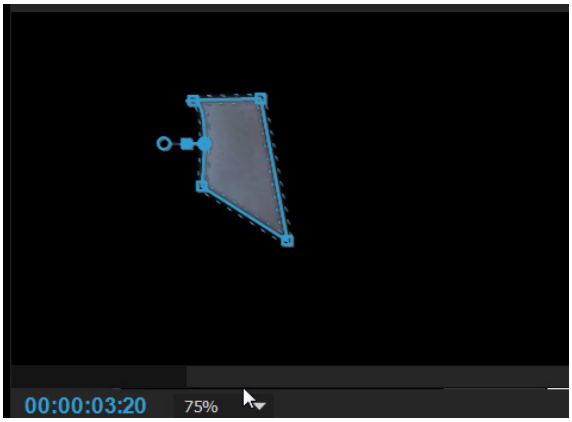


Trade the RGB Parade for the Vectorscope by choosing > **Presets** > **Vectorscope YUV**.

All human skin, regardless of ethnicity, is orange and should fall within a few degrees of the highlighted line:

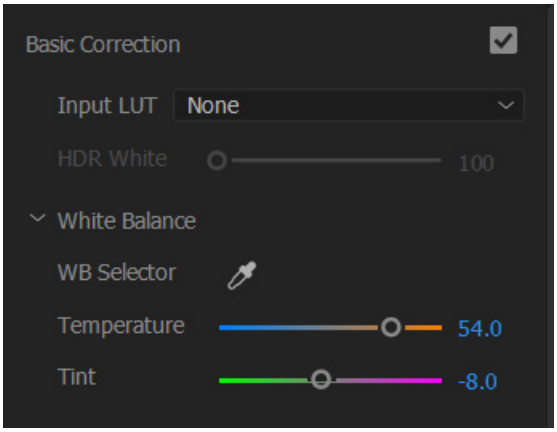
Open the opacity effect in the effect controls tab, then use its pen tool to mask out everything except a patch of your subject's skin:





Now check the skin on the vectorscope. If it doesn't fall along the orange line, You'll need to change it. Open the **Basic Correction > White Balance** tab and adjust the **Temperature** and **Tint** sliders until your little blob falls right along the orange line.

The Vectorscope has two lines forming an X right through it. One of these runs from orange to blue (temperature) and one runs from green to magenta (tint).



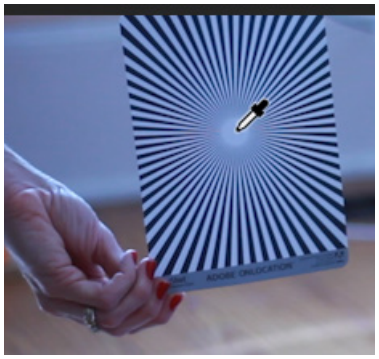
Delete the mask and inspect your work.

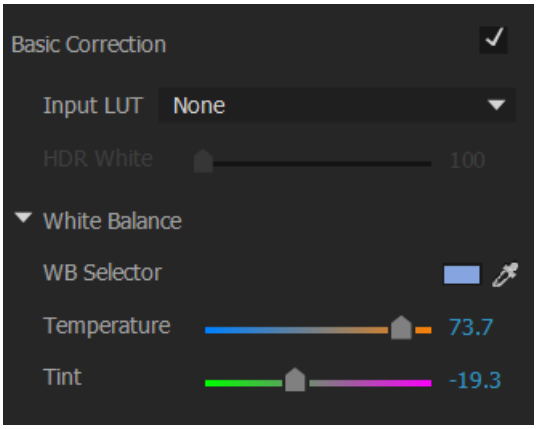
Quick & Dirty Primary Correction

The Lumetri Color Panel also includes an automatic white balance control. This only works well if you remember to put a white or gray card in the shot. Trying to white balance off anything else typically yields poor results.

1. Select your hero shot
You know, with the gray card.

2. Define white
Select the eyedropper found in the White Balance portion of the Basic Correction tab. Use it to click on a white or gray part of your gray card.



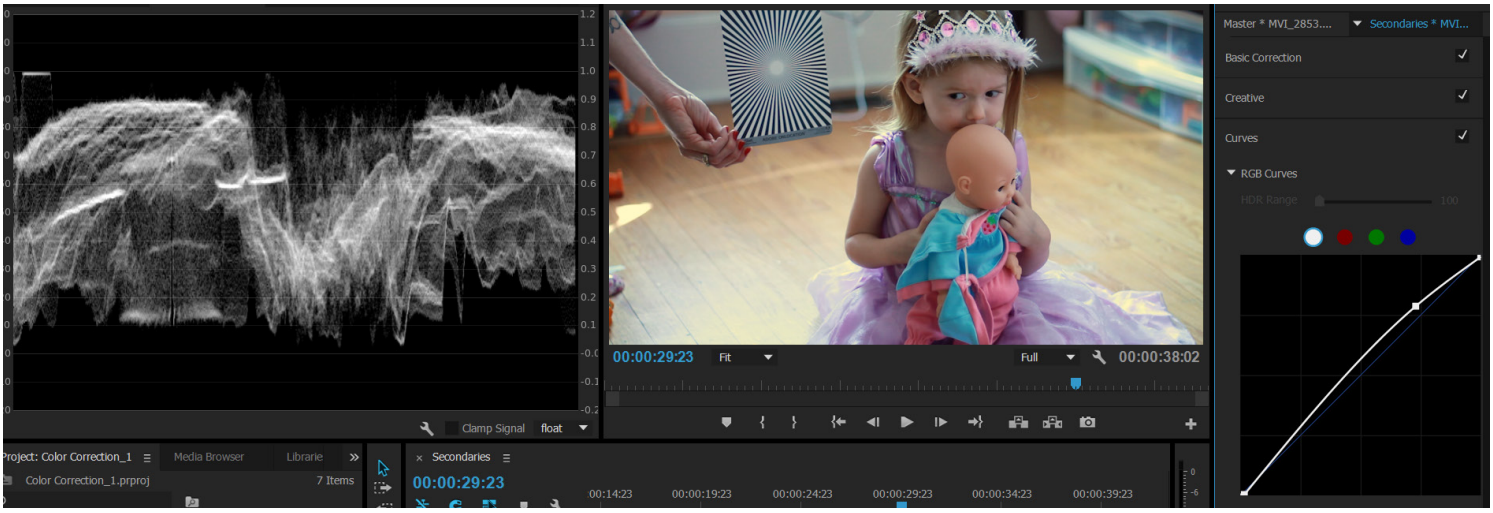


3. Boom! Magic.
What a time to be alive.

4. <u>Adjust exposure and contrast as needed.</u>

Set your Luemtri scopes to Waveform (Luma). Using the Luma Curve (the white one) adjust your black point, then your white point, and then adjust midtones to taste.

The example below didn't need much correction. You may need to zoom in on this pdf to see my changes. I lowered the black and white points just a hair and raised the highlights a little.



<u>Shot Matching</u>

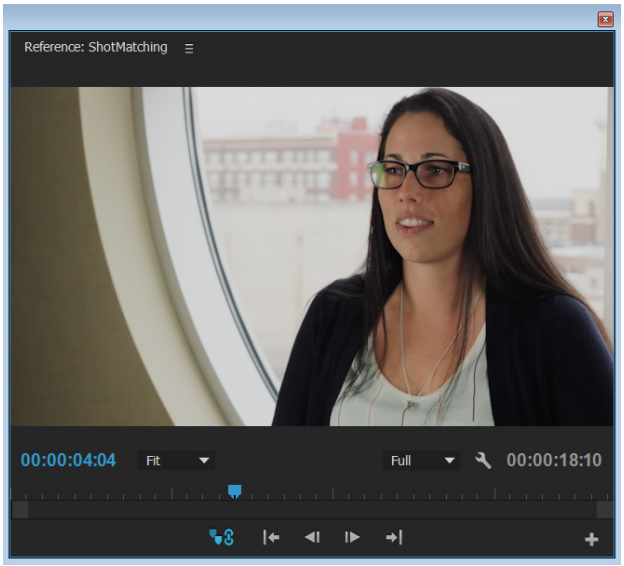
Now that you've finished primary correction on your hero shot, you need to make all the other shots in that particular scene match it. If the whole scene was shot with the same camera settings under similar lighting, you can usually just copy and paste the Lumetri Color effect from your hero shot.

If your shots look different, you may need to match them by hand:

1. Park the playhead on the hero shot.

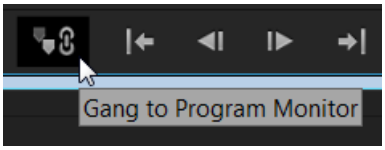
2. Open up the Reference Monitor

From the menus at the top go to **Window > Reference Monitor**.



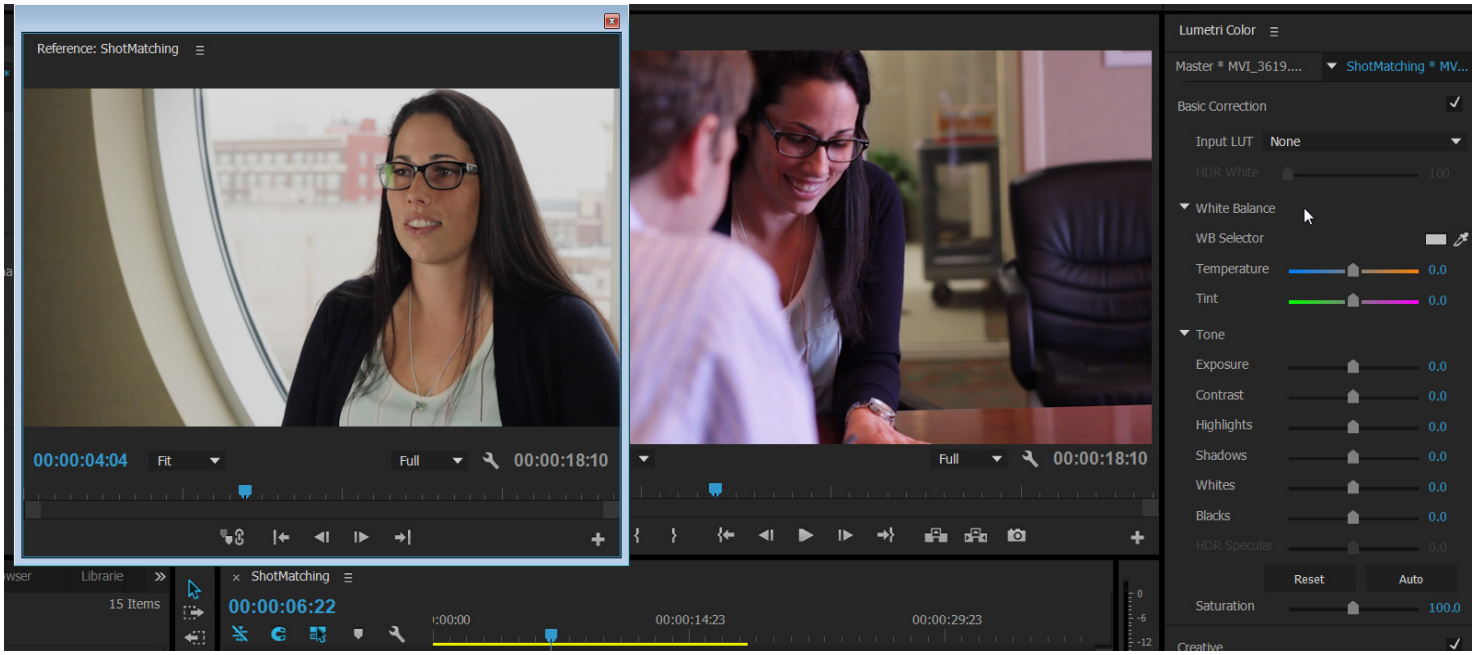
3. Ungang the reference monitor

Turn off the **Gang to Program Monitor** button at the bottom of the reference monitor. This will keep the reference monitor parked on your hero shot while you scrub through the next shot on the timeline.



4. Drag the reference monitor next to the program monitor.

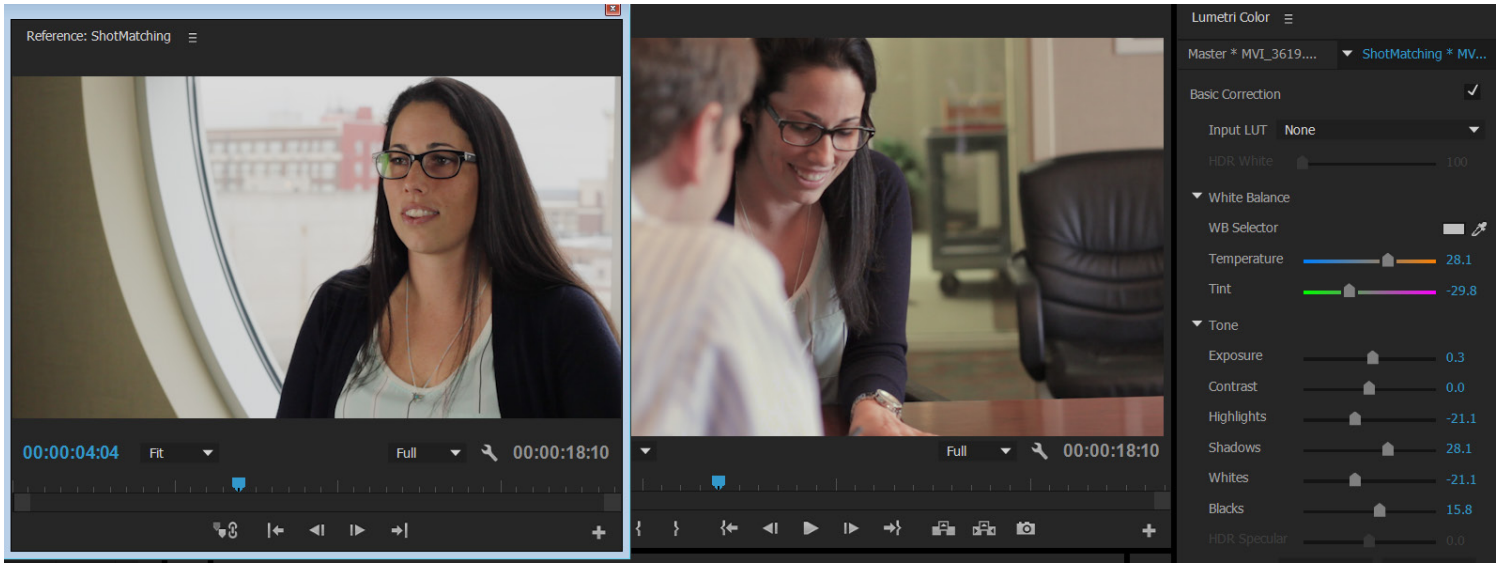
Now we can compare our two shots:



Okay, here it becomes more art than science. This is what I usually do:

5. Fart around with the Basic Correction sliders until the two shots look similar.

Seriously, that's my system.



If you are having problems, try comparing skin tones in the vectorscope or black and white points in the waveform monitor.

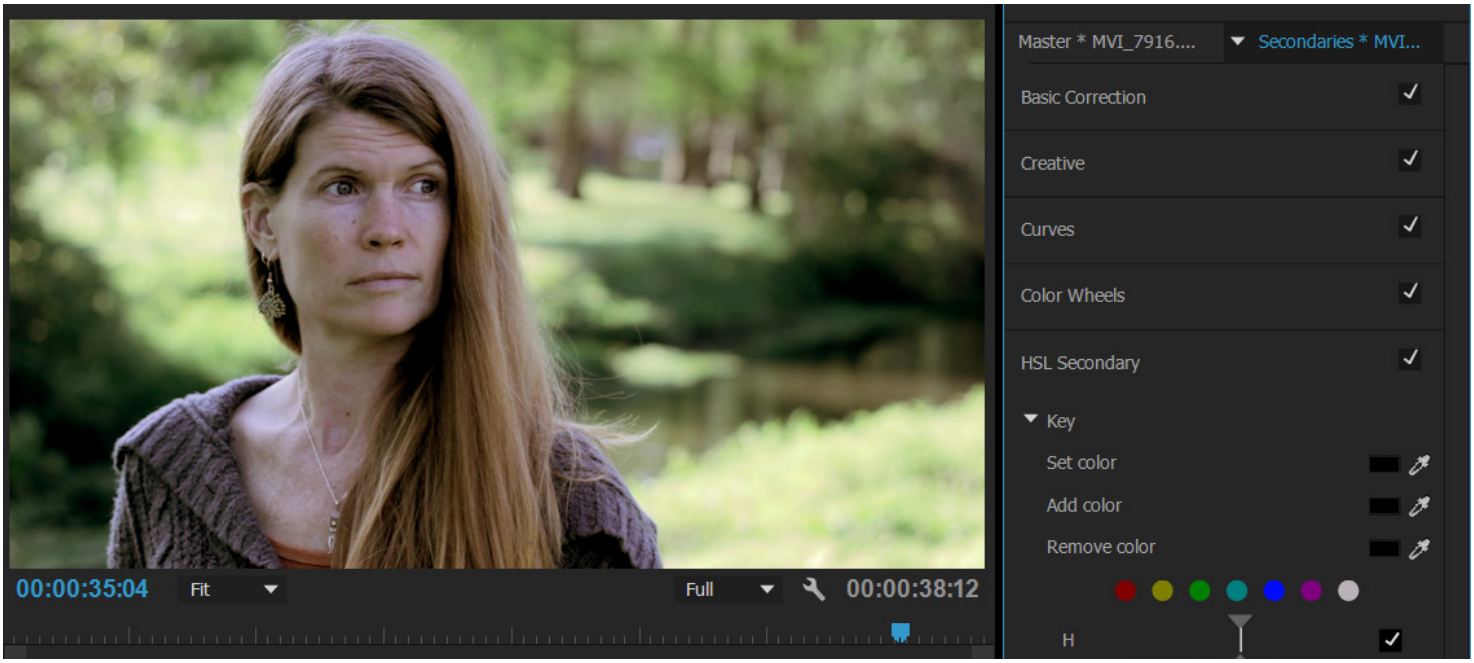
Secondary Color Correction

Secondary corrections only alter part of the frame. There are two types: **masked secondaries** and **keyed secondaries**. Keyed secondaries only alter pixels in a specified hue, saturation and lightness range. Masked secondaries (sometimes called *power windows*) only affect the part of a frame within a mask.

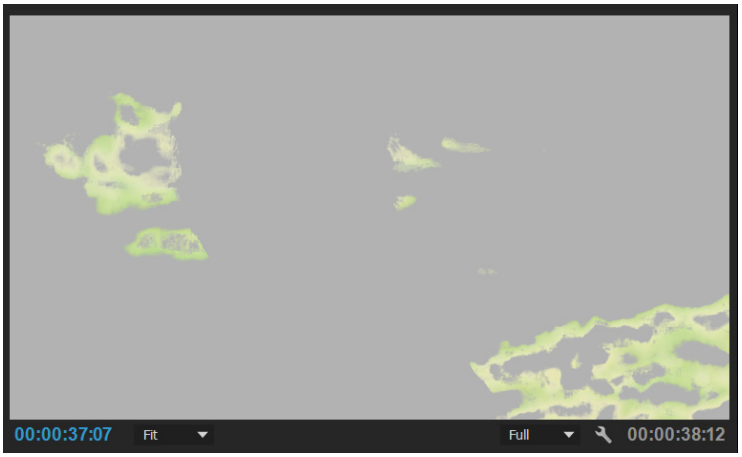
Keyed Secondaries

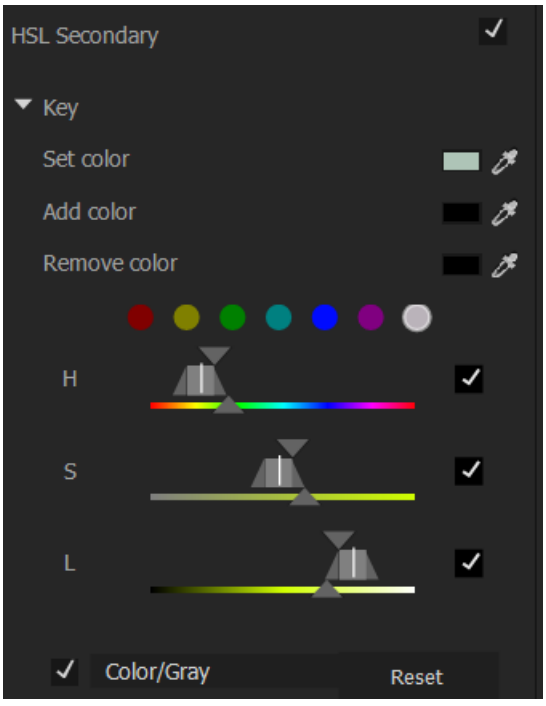
Keying selects pixels in a certain HSL (Hue, Saturation, Luma) for correction. Keying works best when the color to be keyed is not similar to others in the frame. This is why bright green is used for chroma key screens. Pulling a clean key is easier if you do it before making any masked secondaries.

The following clip was shot in the springtime and I'd like to make it look like autumn, so I'm going to key the green foliage and change it to fall colors.

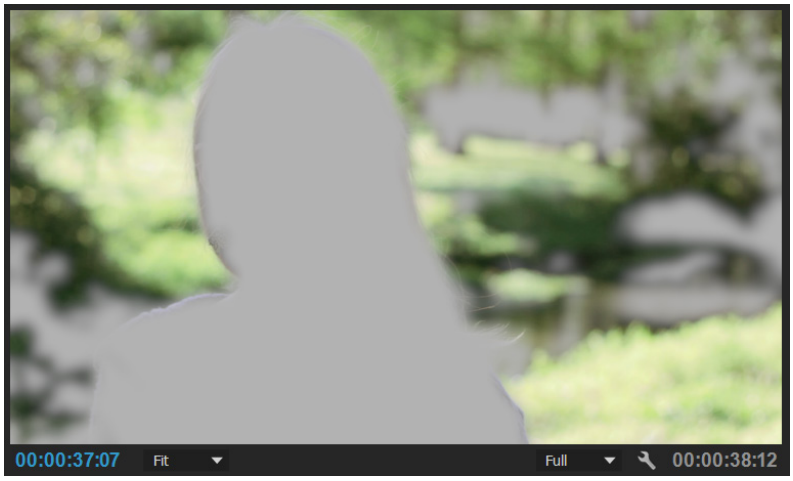


1. Open the **HSL Secondary** tab and click on the **Set color** eyedropper. Use it to select a piece of the background. Be sure to check the box labeled **Color/Gray**.

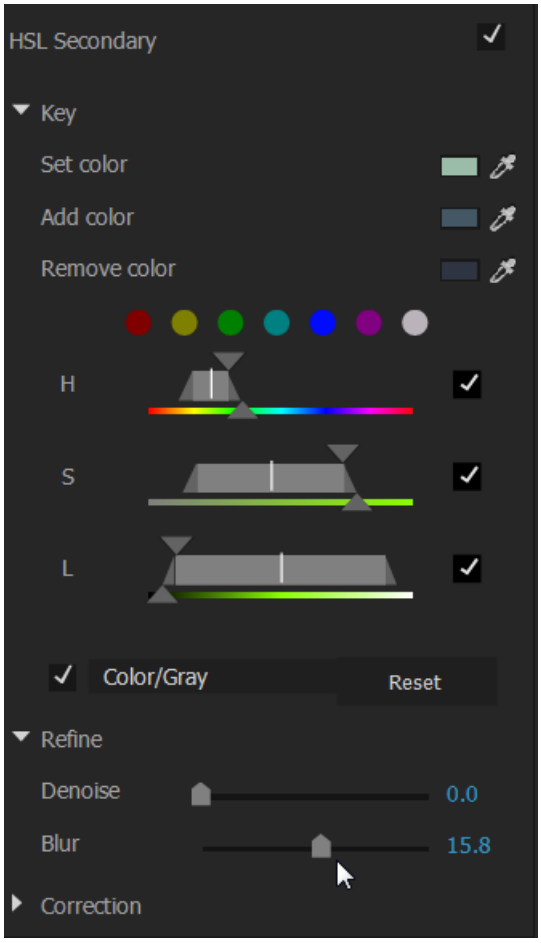




2. Refine your key.
Use the **Add color** eyedropper to keep adding to your key. The parts in color are the parts we will be changing.



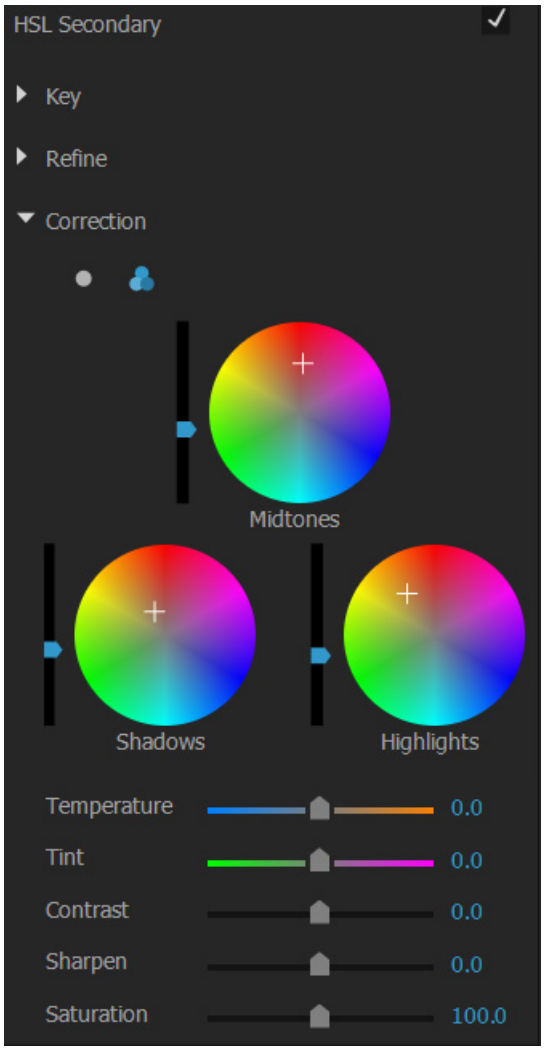
Alternately, you can use the HSL sliders to define the hue, saturation and luma range of your key.



3. Blur the crap out of your key.
Use more blur than you think you need. Then deselect the Color/Gray box.

4. Make your corrections.
Open the **Correction** tab and play.

I chose to send the shadows, midtones and highlights to slightly different warm colors so that the background wouldn't look too uniform. I also used the sliders to the left of each wheel to slightly darken the background.



Raw Footage

Primary Correction

Keyed Secondary

Masked Secondaries

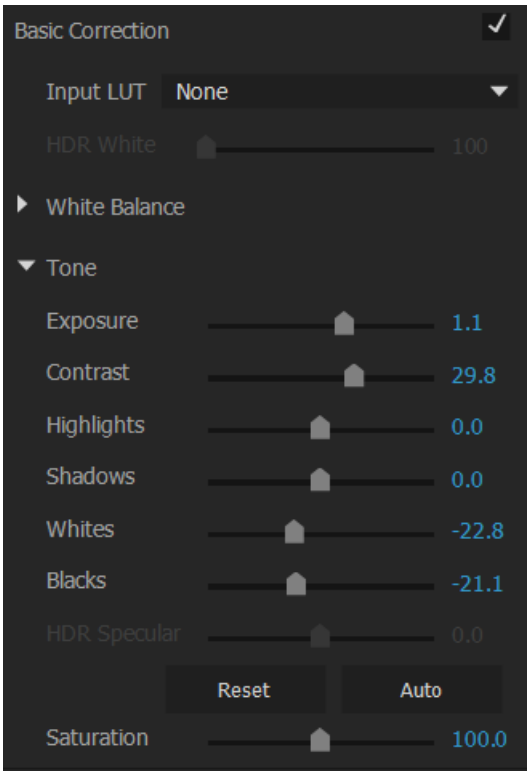
Masks are commonly used to relight sections of the frame that have exposure problems. Let's mask the actress to brighten her up a bit.

1. Apply a second **Lumetri Color** effect to the clip.

2. Use the effect's pen tool to create a mask around your subject. Feather the edge of the mask by pulling the hollow handle.

   Any changes we make in the new Lumetri Color effect will only take place within the mask.

3. In the Lumetri Color panel, adjust the exposure as you see fit. In this example I used the **Basic Correction** tab, but you could just as easily use the **Curves** or the **Color Wheels**.



Warning

As of the time of this writing (August 2017), the Lumetri Color Panel only controls the most recently added Lumetri Color effect. This means if you add a second Lumetri Color effect, you will no longer be able to adjust your primary corrections in the Lumetri panel. Adjustments can still be made in the Effect Controls panel.

Raw Footage

Primary Correction

Masked Secondary

Vignettes

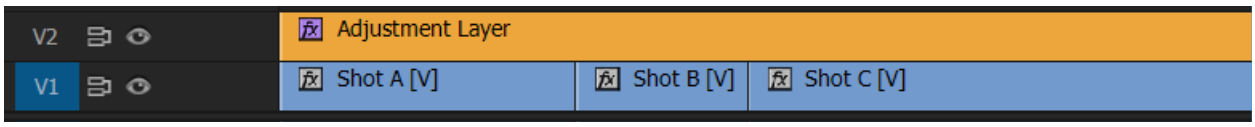
Vignettes typically darken the edges of the frame to draw the viewer's eye toward center. The Lumetri color panel has a built in vignette effect that's very easy to use. Because effects are rendered in order (top to bottom in the effect controls tab), adding a vignette can mess up any keyed secondaries you may have. It's better to add a separate Lumetri Color effect at the end or even put it on an adjustment layer.

Blur Vignettes

You can also blur the edges of your frame to create a hazy, dreamlike feel. Add the Gaussian Blur effect and give it an ellipse mask. Invert the mask and be sure the box labeled Repeat Edge Pixels is checked.

Adding a Look

Color correction is the process of normalizing exposure and white balance and then matching all of our shots together. Color grading is adding a stylized look to enhance the feel of the scene. To simplify this process, we're going to put our look on an **adjustment layer**. (File > New > Adjustment Layer)

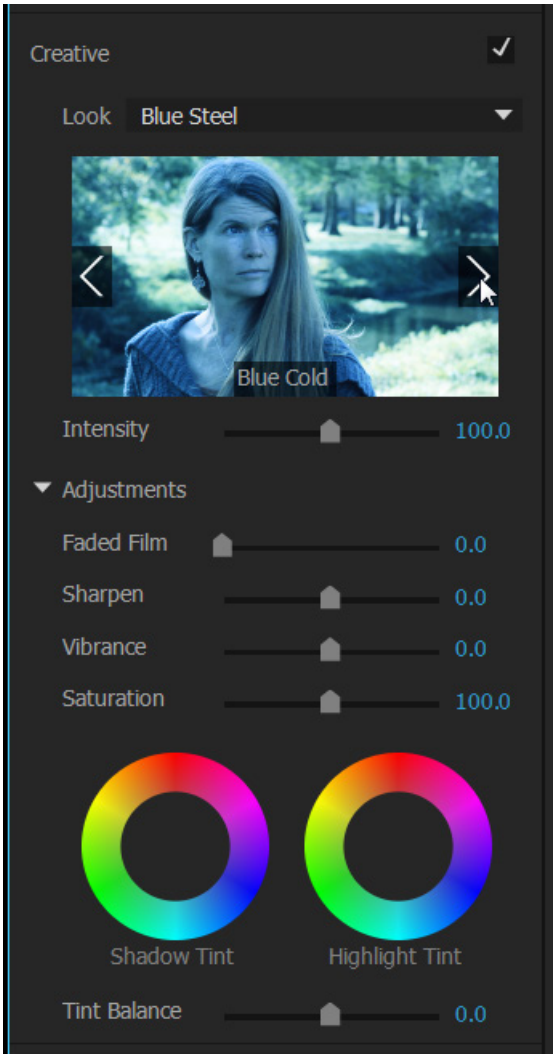


This way if we need to adjust our look, we only have to do it once and it will affect the entire scene. Also we can dial in a look by changing the adjustment layer's opacity - **JUST REMEMBER TO TURN OPACITY KEYFRAMES OFF.**

Lumetri Creative Tab

The Creative tab in the Lumetri Color panel includes premade looks that aren't very good unless you dial the intensity way back.

These are actually LUTs (Look Up Tables) - preset RGB curves made for digital cinema cameras whose raw footage is very flat and washed out. Applying these looks to footage that has already undergone primary correction will yield an oversaturated high contrast monstrosity. (The example to the right has been applied to our raw footage.)



You know what? Don't use these looks. They're not great. Some of the other controls in this tab are okay:

Faded Film will lower the color contrast and make your footage look like... well, like faded film.

Sharpen, when used *very sparingly*, will find edges and make them more crisp. Too much will make your footage look over-processed.

Vibrance can alter saturation while preserving skin tones. This is nice if you want to boost background saturation without making your subject look like a tomato.

Since this text is aimed at beginners, we're not going to create our own looks. Instead, there are plenty of free downloadable *presets* out there.

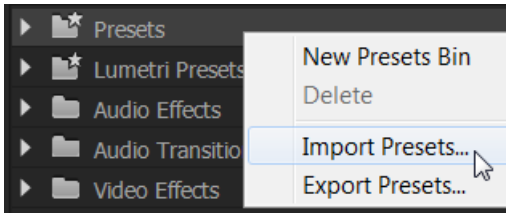
Effect Presets

In Chapter Five we discussed saving effect settings as presets that can be used again. These presets can also be exported and shared with other Premiere Pro users.

To import effect presets:
1. First you need to download some. My favorites are:

    Jarle's Presets v 3.0 from premierepro.net
    Luster Grade Presets from colorgradingcentral.com

2. Unzip the files and open Premiere Pro.
3. Open the Effects tab and right-click on the Presets folder.
4. Choose **Import Presets** and navigate to the appropriate .prfpset file.
5. Click **Open** and the presets are imported.



To use effect presets:
Use them just like an effect. Drag and drop to a clip or adjustment layer.

Here is the footage we've corrected without a look applied:

Raw Footage

With Primary, Secondaries and Vignette

And if we apply a look preset:

Luster Grades 70's

Luster Grades Vogue
(on adjustment layer at 70% opacity, vignette increased)

Jarle's Bleach Bypass 1
(vignette removed)

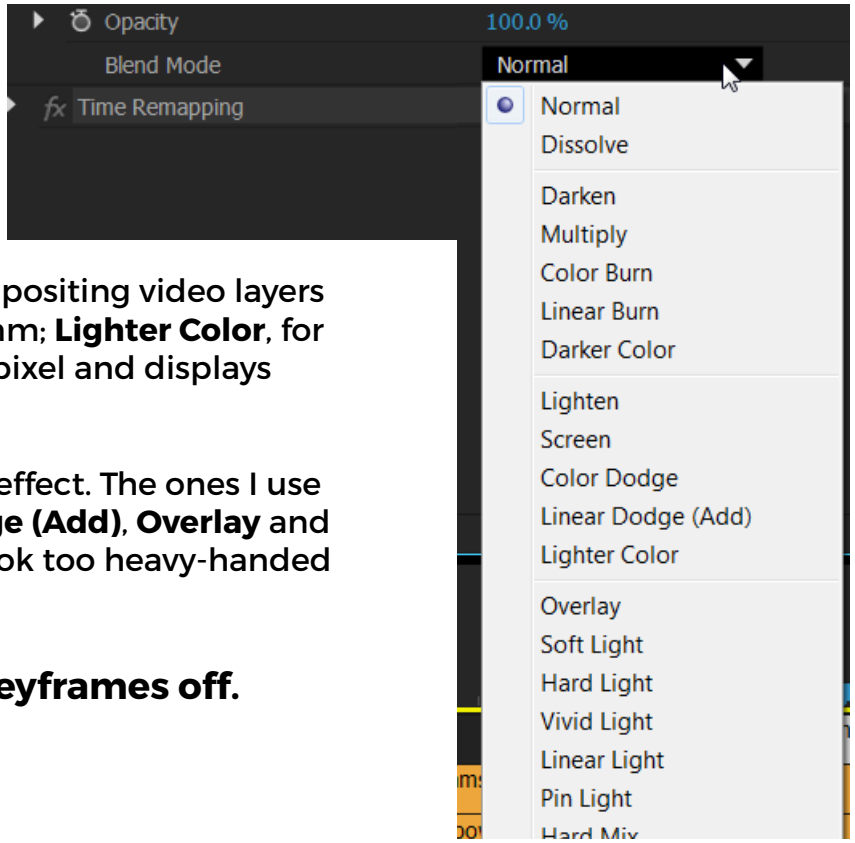
Jarle's Blue Blurred Highlights
(vignette removed)

Jarle's Day for Night
(applied to raw footage with a little contrast added)

Jarle's Cross Process 2

Blend Modes

Blend modes are the secret sauce to creating a great look. They allow us to add layers like film grain, light leaks, dust, scratches and film burns to our footage.



Blend modes are different ways of compositing video layers together. Each uses a different algorithm; **Lighter Color**, for example, compares every overlapping pixel and displays whichever is brighter.

Blend modes are found in the Opacity effect. The ones I use most are **Multiply**, **Screen**, **Linear Dodge (Add)**, **Overlay** and **Soft Light**. Play with them all. If they look too heavy-handed you can always lower the opacity.

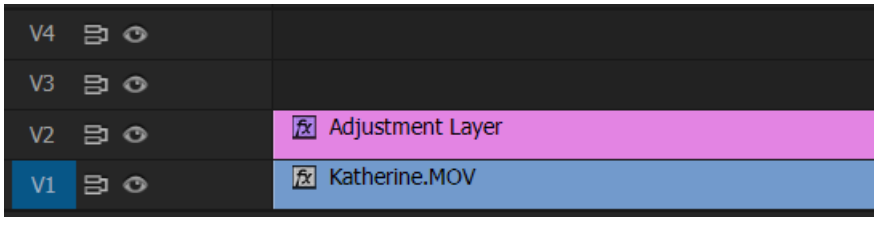
Just remember to turn opacity keyframes off.

How Do Blend Modes Work?

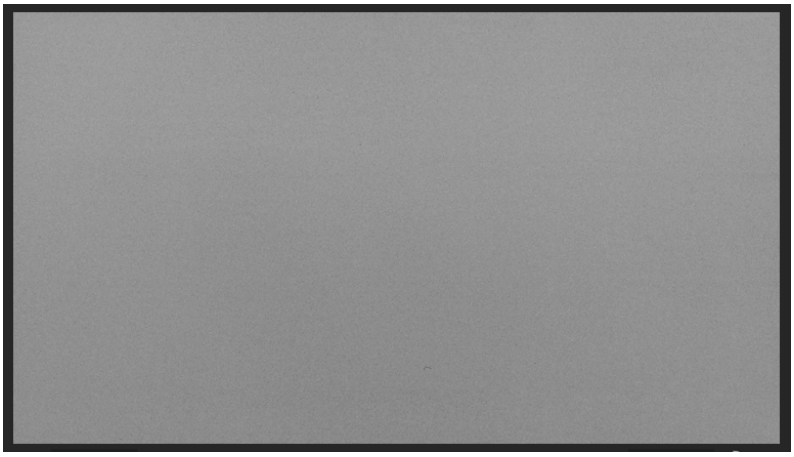
Here I've got some DSLR footage that I want to look like a vintage low budget zombie flick.

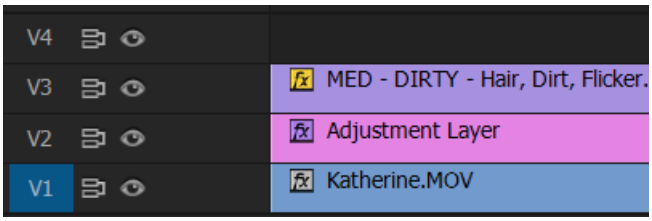
I put the footage on V1 with some primary correction and nothing else:

I put an adjustment layer on V2 and add the Luster Grades 70's preset. I could add this effect straight to V1, but then I'd have to add it to every clip in the video. The adjustment layer can be trimmed out to cover the whole sequence.



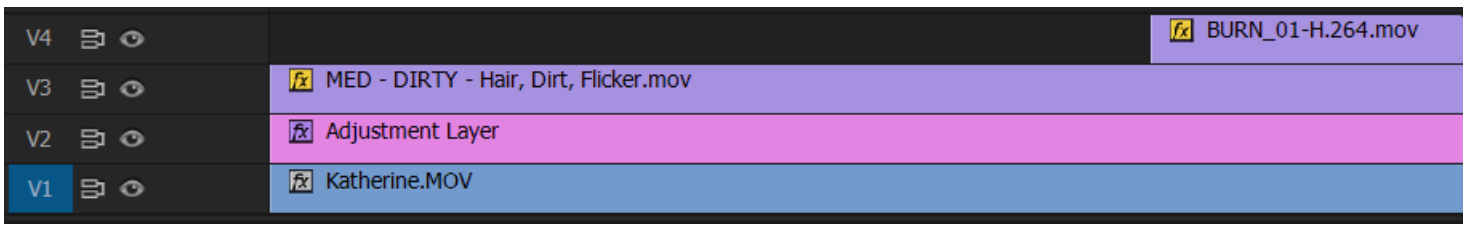
On V3 I add a layer of film grain complete with hair, dust and scratches. At first it looks like this:



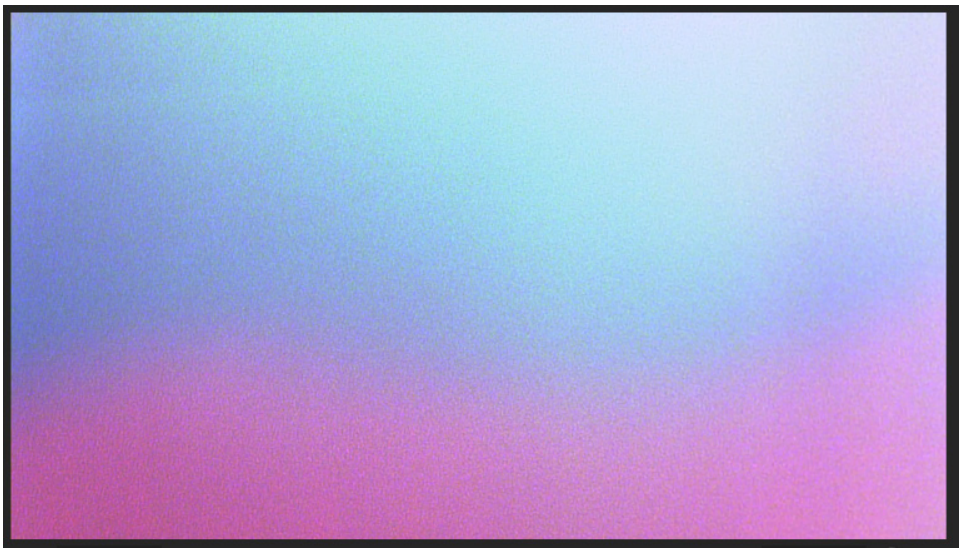


Because it's at 100% opacity and the **Blend Mode** setting is left on **Normal**, we can't see through it. But when I change the **Blend Mode** to **Vivid Light**, it looks like this:

The last thing I'm going to do is add a film burn to the end of the shot. The burn goes on V4:



Let's audition some different blend modes. If I do nothing, It's opaque and we can't see our original footage at all:



Blend Mode = Normal
Opacity = 100%

I could just lower the opacity without changing the blend mode, but that's not great either:

Blend Mode = Normal
Opacity = 50%

(Remember to turn off opacity keyframes!)

Let's play with some others and see what we get:

Blend Mode = Overlay
Opacity = 50%

Blend Mode = Multiply
Opacity = 75%

Blend Mode = Subtract
Opacity = 50%

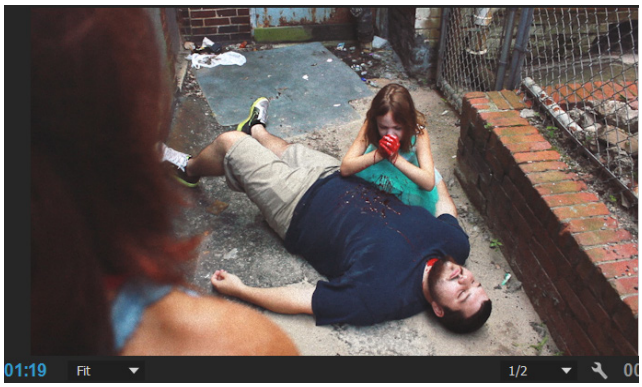
Blend Mode = Soft Light
Opacity = 60%

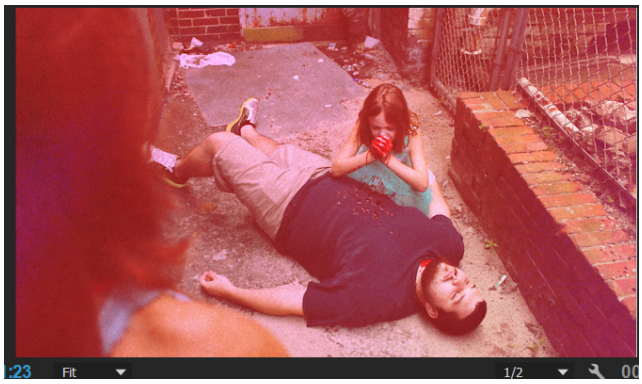
Here is what I wound up using:

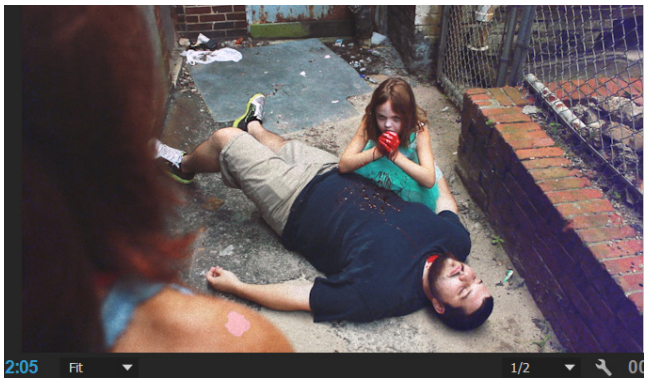
Blend Mode = Pin Light
Opacity = 40%

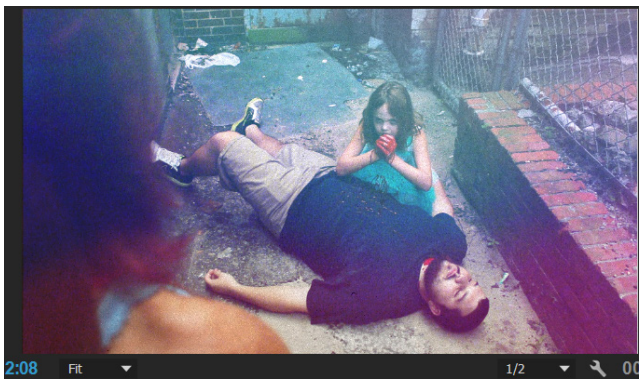
Note in the timeline that the burn is very short - only 16 frames. It also is constantly changing. Here is what the finished footage looks like a few frames before the burn:

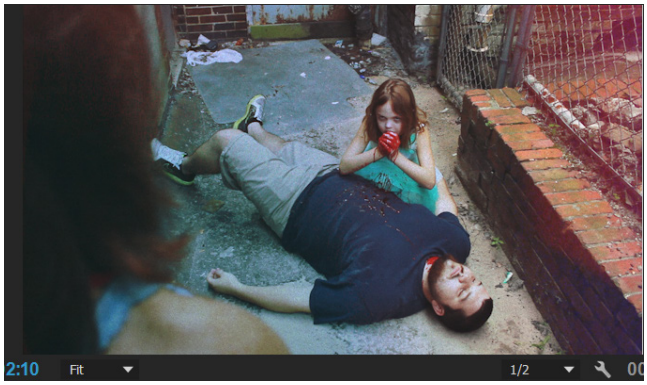
Here are a handful of frames to show the burn in action:











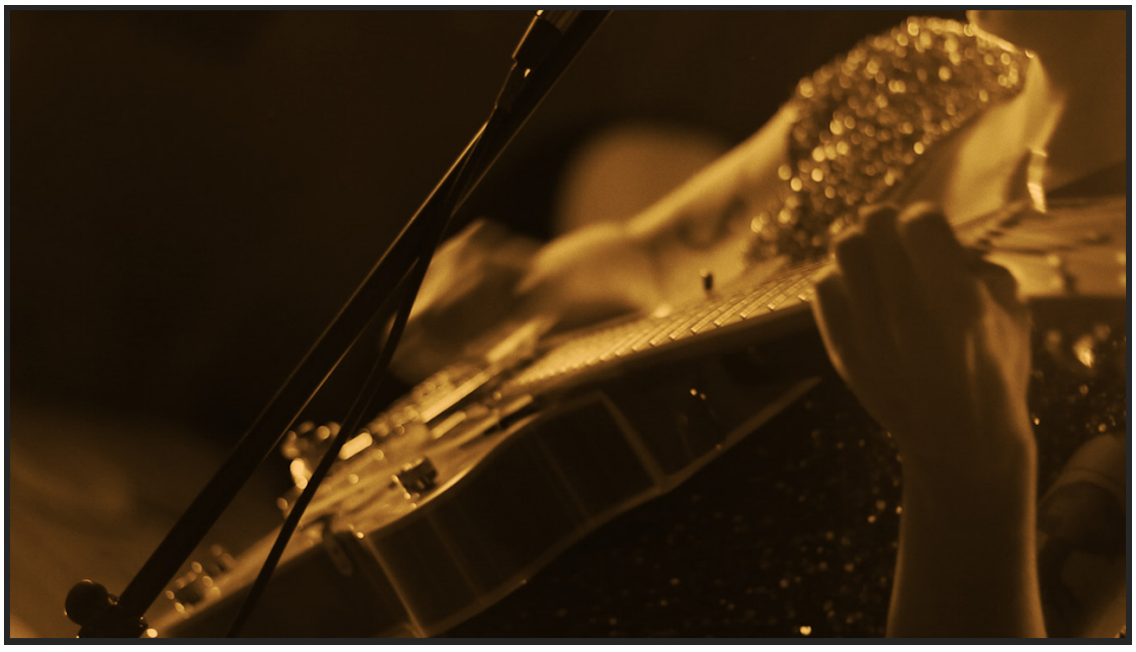
Here, have some more free stuff:

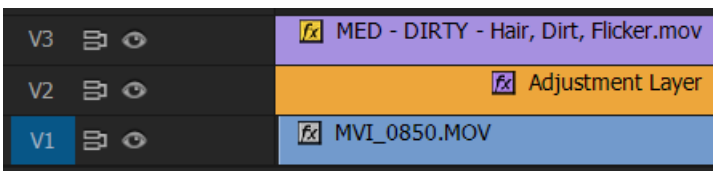
Vashi Visuals is a fantastic blog by editor Vashi Nedomansky. He has compiled a list of 335 free filmmaking tools and assets, including tons of grain, light leaks and burns.

Click here and start filling up your hard drive with goodies.

You can also tint black and white footage to get a duotone effect. Here is the raw footage:

Below I added contrast to the footage on V1, used Jarle's Amber preset on an adjustment layer, and added some film grain to V3 (Blend mode = Overlay, Opacity = 50%).



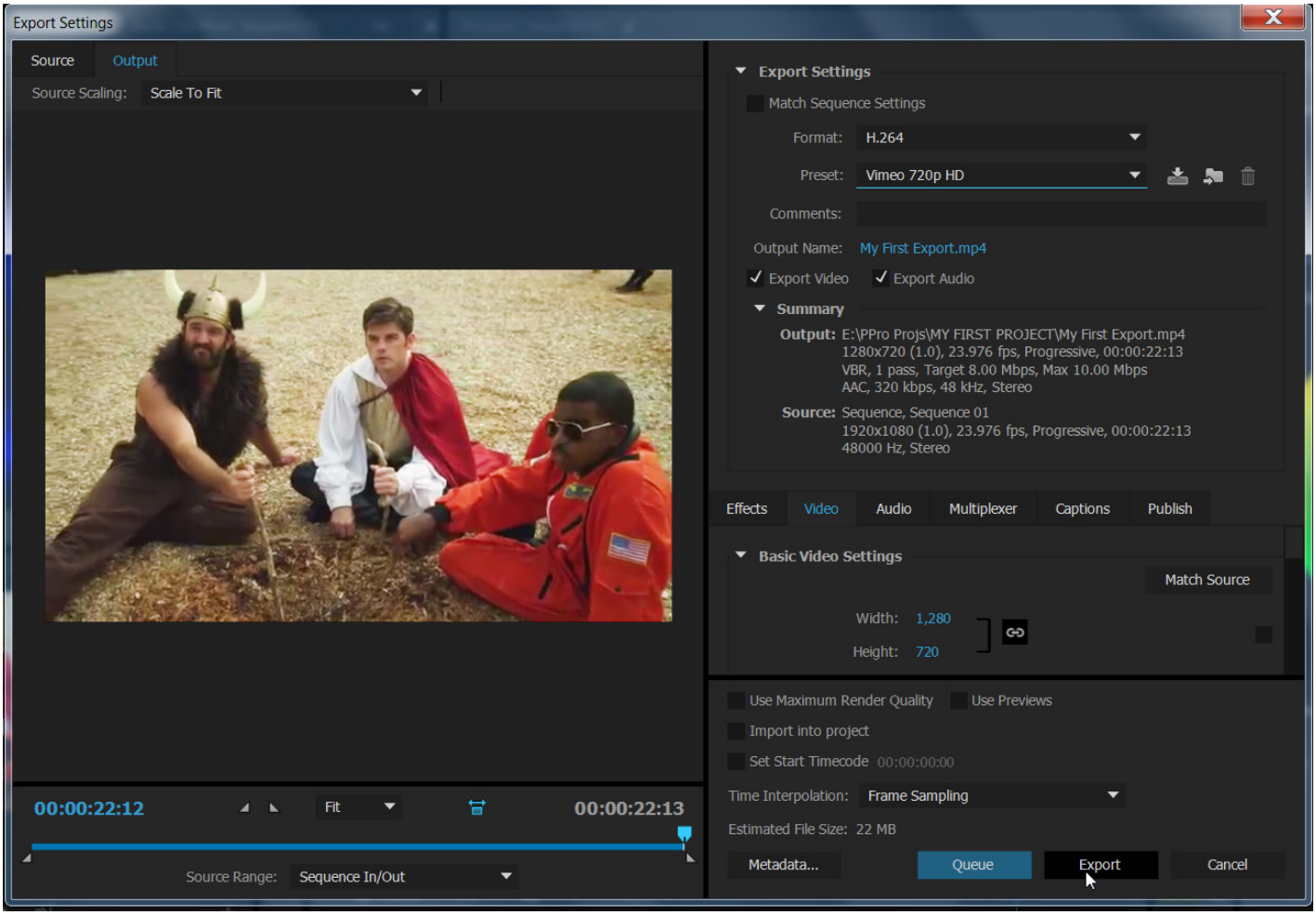


The project file that you've been saving is not a movie. It's simply a text file that tells Premiere how to build your film. The project file is just a recipe, we need to export in order to bake a cake.

To export your film:

1. Click anywhere on the timeline to highlight it, go to the top menu and select **File > Export > Media**

The export window opens up:



2. Choose your export settings.
   I usually just click the **Match Sequence Settings** box, but you may need a specific codec. If you set **Format** to **H.264**, you can find presets for youtube and vimeo.

3. Click the **Output Name** field. Give the video a name and make sure it will export to the project folder you created at the beginning.

4. If your video has been resized, click the **Use Maximum Render Quality** box. If your footage has not been resized, **leave it unchecked**. Checking this box will increase file size and slow your export without increasing quality.

5. Click **EXPORT.**